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THE MANGLED REPORT

THE Government on the first day of the debate on the Beveridge Report administered to the country's hopes of a better world the severest shock they have yet received. Sir John Anderson's verbose speech left us guessing, at some crucial points, what precisely it is that the Government intends; but Sir Kingsley Wood next day was more explicit in negation. The starting point of its case is that it is afraid of the cost of the scheme, which means that, in spite of some comforting phrases, it is not really determined to maintain national productivity at a socially desirable level. That dissipates every chance of bold, national planning. It has capitulated to the insurance companies without so much as a sham fight. It has made it fairly clear that it means to bring none of the proposals of the Report into force until the war is over, or to create a Ministry of Social Security at any time. It has cut down the proposal for family allowances to a pitiable figure which yields 2*s.* 6*d.* for each child in a family of two. It has swept away Sir William's progressive proposals for old age. Much else is either doubtful or disappointing. But the most sinister thing in the pronouncements was the revelation, hidden in verbiage, that unemployment and disability benefits are to be paid only for a limited period. There must be, Sir John Anderson argued, in addition to a compulsory training scheme, some other "effective safeguard against abuse of unemployment benefit." The safeguard Sir John has in mind is, we take it, the lash of hunger and shame. In other words, after a limited period of benefit, the unemployed or disabled man will be handed over in some form to "means tested" Public Assistance. The central idea of the Report, the recognition of the right of a man and his wife to a minimum of 40*s.* a week in all circumstances is thus thrown overboard. So far from abolishing the fear of want, the Government realises that want has its uses in a competitive society. The Indians are not the only people excluded from the Atlantic Charter. Hardly less intolerable, with the spectre of inflation on the horizon, was the rejection of the stipulation that all the figures in the Report must vary with the cost of living. It is idle to pretend that 70 per cent. of the Report is assured. Its basic principles are gone. If this really is the Government's last word, it seems to us intolerable that the Labour Party should remain in the Coalition. If it does so, it risks the loss of the younger generation and defection of all that is vital within it.

THE RED ARMY AND ALLIED POLICY

THE Red Army, now on the eve of its twenty-fifth anniversary, has one peculiar distinction: never in military history has an army been so grotesquely under-estimated both by its friends and its enemies. Some day we may learn how far British foreign policy in the crucial years 1933–38 was influenced fatally in the direction of appeasement by the misguided belief in Whitehall that the armed forces of the U.S.S.R. could give no adequate backing to a collective stand against aggression. It is certain that in 1941 Hitler and the German General Staff, though they had better means of knowing the facts, utterly miscalculated the odds when the decision to invade Russia was taken. They may have drawn faulty inferences from the showing made by a few low-category Russian divisions used by Stalin in the early stages of the Finnish campaign. They may simply have considered that the formidable Panzer and motorised infantry striking force which they created in the winter of 1940–41 would vanquish any army not similarly equipped. More probably they shared with other western General Staffs the illusion that an army born of revolution, and whose command had not long since been purged of "unreliable" senior ex-Tsarist officers, was bound to lack "professional" efficiency.

They know better now. Taken to some extent by surprise, before adequate defensive dispositions could be made, the Red Army preserved its cohesion and incomparable morale through the long retreat to the very gates of Moscow in the summer and autumn of 1941. Despite grave losses in men and material it counter-attacked during the following winter with vigour and, within limits, success. Once again, in 1942, an overpowering German concentration — though this time on a narrower front—had to be met by a deep withdrawal during which the enemy spear-head was first blunted and finally brought to a standstill. Then, for the second time, the Red Army launched a general counter-offensive. The results have already far surpassed those attained during the previous winter, and it is clear that the explanation is not to be sought exclusively in the weakening, through casualties, of the German defence. The German soldier is fighting as well as ever; and, however rash may have been Hitler's strategy in ordering a simultaneous advance both to the Volga and the Caucasus, there is little to criticise in the tactics of his army commanders. What has happened is that the U.S.S.R., having started the defence of its territories with an army of first-rate quality, inferior to the enemy only in material and the practical experience of its commanders, has forged in the fires of war a fighting force fully as efficient as the Wehrmacht. The operations of the past three months have demonstrated that the Russian High Command has learnt the art of timing perfectly a series of co-ordinated offensives on an immense scale; its detailed planning and staff-work appear to be as excellent as, time after time, its sudden and disconcerting thrusts, based seemingly on a well-developed system of intelligence, have been daring. The Russians' supply organisation, in a winter campaign over a terrain with indifferent rail communications, has worked wonders, and one of the chief factors in their continuing victories has been the extreme mobility of their shock formations and the speed with which reconnaissance has been followed up by armour and artillery. The fruits have been the progressive rout of the Germans at Stalingrad, in the Caucasus, on the Donetz and the recapture of Kharkov.

It is still impossible to predict how much

farther the impetus of the Russian offensive can be carried. General Dittmar, the broadcaster, is reduced to seeking comfort for his German listeners in the reflection that there is ample "room for manoeuvre" between the Donetz and the Vistula. On the other hand, the Third Reich still commands great resources in production capacity; and, with the aid of slave labour, it may be possible for Sauckel to mobilise for the Front sufficient fresh man-power to avert early collapse. It is not Germany itself but its satellite Powers that look like cracking; Hungary, suffering from the crippling losses of man-power has recently put forward peace-feelers on her own behalf. The German Generals may already be planning to withdraw to the Soviet frontier and there make a "backs to the wall" stand. Meanwhile, Nazi propaganda aims to stiffen German resistance and frighten the Western bourgeoisies by the danger of "world Bolshevism" if Germany is defeated.

For us it is immediately important to realise that in any event, the Red Army is likely to play a wholly preponderant part in the United Nations' progress towards a decision in the European theatre of war. Unless we make the appalling and improbable assumption that the European war will continue until the United States forces eventually deployed on the Continent are numbered in millions, the Anglo-American contribution to military victory on land is bound to be relatively insignificant, no matter how valuable may be the assistance given directly and indirectly by the naval and air forces of the Western Allies. And it is on land alone that decisive victory can be won. It follows that the future in Europe depends above all else on the relations of the democracies to the Soviet Union; Britain may still have an important part to play—provided that we take a realist view of our strength and decide to stand for the democratic ideas we claim to stand for, and discard a social attitude that cannot in any case survive in post-war Europe.

That our assistance to Russia in supplies of material, in naval and air co-operation, and in the promised diversionary assaults on all possible points of the Continent will be unstinted goes, we assume, for granted. But there is another important field in which we can play an essential part. The sooner that we can convince Europe that our purpose goes beyond the mere overthrow of Hitler and Mussolini, and that we have framed and intend to execute plans for the positive reconstruction of a Continent from which Fascism in all its modes has been eliminated, the sooner can we hope for that *risorgimento* among the enslaved workers both in enemy-occupied and enemy countries which we must promote if we hope for early or abiding peace. If we are to do that, the promises of the Atlantic Charter are insufficient; agreement in political warfare must be reached with Stalin.

The spate of Nazi propaganda which hopes to save German militarism by terrifying western capitalism will not, it is clear, succeed. The Premier and President have made that clear at Casablanca. Unfortunately, what was also clear at Casablanca is their lack of will and of power to face the implications of their own Charter, to repudiate the "policy" of bolstering up puppets, left over from a pre-war era of supporting Vichyite collaborationists in areas beneath their control. Stalin by universal consent is a realist; the hope of making something creditable out of this war and of avoiding the danger of ending it in a position that already foreshadows the next war depends on full and frank discussion in Moscow to-day.

Conversations in Chungking

We hope it is true that the visit of Field-Marshal Dill and General Arnold to Chungking resulted in the complete agreement claimed in the British-American communiqué. It was high time something was done; the pep effects of Wendell Willkie's visit have long worn off and all the news that has reached us from China recently has been so depressing that we have hesitated to write about it without detailed confirmation. The economic position is certainly deplorable. An immense process of inflation has been going on and prices have soared to preposterous heights. Economic misery and the absence of any obvious Allied help in China have been damaging to nascent Chinese democracy, and many stories reach this country of increasing military control over education and over all spheres of Chinese life. In the long run failure to reach United Nations agreement in China could be as serious for the world as failure to reach an understanding with Moscow.

"Humiliated, Starved and Tortured"

The Giraud regime in North Africa has pledged itself to release political prisoners who do not deserve internment. We recommend to their notice the case of the prisoners of Djelfa. There are 470 Spaniards, veterans of the Republican army, already interned for four years; 275 members of the International Brigade, the largest group Russian, and about 100 North African residents, imprisoned because they tried to help the refugees, or because they are Jews. Some of the men actually have visas for Mexico, which they have been prevented from using. The food is reported to be inadequate, there is no sanitation, the hospital is an open yard, there is no medicine for constant epidemics nor even for dysentery or phthisis. There is much bullying, and some of the prisoners who try to smuggle in food for the sick are put into "abominable" cells. Apart from 50 who are over 55 years old, and some 100 who are physically unfit, the veterans all want to serve in the Allied armies, but not, naturally, under the French, who, as these men say in a letter of appeal to General Eisenhower, have "for long years humiliated, starved and tortured them." They have appealed to the head of the Allied services and to General Eisenhower, personally offering their services. The suffering of these men has always been a blot on the fame of France; they were sacrificed to the spite of Franco's Spain, and later to the Fascism of the North African governors. They have fought for democracy, that is for our cause, and suffered a slow martyrdom of captivity for it. Now that we have the responsibility for their fate (for none can doubt that if we choose to insist, they will be released) are we to add active connivance to our former sin of neglect? It is by our treatment of men such as these that our truth to our avowed faith will be judged.

Lord Nuffield Does It Again

A benefaction of £10 millions, primarily for research, takes the breath away. Yet there will be no difficulty in finding good uses within the terms of the trust deed for all and more than all Lord Nuffield's latest gift. Medical research, teaching and organisation get pride of place among the purposes of the new Nuffield Foundation; but the social sciences and science and technology also get their share, and "the care and comfort of aged persons," coming at the end of the list, is an object large enough to absorb any conceivable amount of money. Presumably a good deal of the income will go to augment the resources of Lord Nuffield's earlier foundations—the Nuffield medical schools at Oxford, the Nuffield Hospitals Trust, the Nuffield fund for the Special Areas, and Nuffield College, which is concerned with the social sciences. The donor, on this occasion, has chosen to trail his coat by announcing his faith in private enterprise and his belief that spontaneous benefactions from those who have accumulated great private fortunes "are and must always remain a vital factor in the life of the nation." Had Lord Nuffield not thus invited comment, it might perhaps have been regarded as ungracious to point out how large a part of what he gives away would otherwise come to the State either now or eventually by way of taxation. In effect, Lord Nuffield decides what is to be done with his riches instead of leaving the decision in large part to the State. This is no derogation from the excellence of what he has done personally; but it does suggest a doubt whether his behaviour furnishes quite as good a cure for his fellow millionaires as he seems to suppose. After all, there are not many Lord Nuffields; and there are a great many rich men. We are grateful for his munificence; but that does not mean that we find the accompanying gesture at all convincing.

Beveridge Report in the House (*by a Parliamentary Correspondent*)

The Cabinet sub-committee which considered the Beveridge Report (Anderson, Kingsley Wood, Lyttelton, Attlee, Bevin and Morrison), sought to preserve unity. They therefore drew up an innocuous resolution welcoming the Report and sought to get it backed by representatives of all the Parties supporting the Government as a means of initiating a debate upon which they hoped no division would arise. This resolution was brought to the Parliamentary Labour Party's Administrative Committee for their approval at the end of a meeting in which they had discussed whether to put down a motion on the lines of the statement of the National Council of Labour asking for early legislation on the Report. Greenwood was empowered to put his name to the resolution on the understanding that he would open the debate and that no other motions would appear on the Order Paper from Government supporters. Judge of the consternation of the Labour Party when they found motions far more in accord with Party policy put down not only by Liberals but by 40 Tory M.P.s. A lively Party meeting expressed themselves very forcibly and insisted that Greenwood should press the Government for definite acceptance of the Report in principle and for early legislation; the Government were to be asked to give full answer to these questions on the first day. The Party could then decide on its further action.

Greenwood's opening speech was that of a man who has now emptied himself of everything except the power of uttering clichés. It was an unplanned and ill-arranged speech in favour of a planning of the social services. Even his constructive suggestion that the Government should introduce legislation piecemeal and follow with a co-ordinating measure to secure the necessary unity was widely misunderstood in the House as an invitation to the Government to adopt only part of the Report. Anderson's reply was even more badly received by the House. He read a long, dull brief of the kind he might have supplied an unenterprising Minister in his own days as a civil servant. Though he seemed at times to give pledges of implementing parts of the Bill, the refusal of the Government to commit itself in favour of a Minister of Social Security outraged many; omission of workmen's compensation for further consideration seemed yet another postponement of action to end its abuses. A roar of anger greeted the Government's rejection of the proposal for converting industrial assurance into a public service. It was felt that their idea of having a State death benefit alongside the existing insurance company policies so as to avoid compensating the companies and their agents was an attempt to be too clever by half.

Following the debate the Labour Party Administrative Committee met and put down an amendment in the names of Alfred Eames, Shinwell, Jim Griffiths and Ellis Smith asking for an early implementation of the Plan. A subsequent Party meeting told Attlee and Morrison very emphatically that they were not satisfied with Anderson's statement; a decision was postponed, however, about whether the Party should vote against the Government to see whether the Government had anything further to propose. The Government was therefore faced with the prospect of a substantial vote against them on the Beveridge Report from rather different quarters than from those who opposed the Catering Bill. Whether a Coalition Government can survive consideration of questions of reconstruction had become on Wednesday a principal subject of discussion in the lobbies.

That was how matters stood before Sir Kingsley Wood spoke on Wednesday afternoon. He destroyed any idea that the Government meant to do anything: piecemeal legislation to carry out parts of the Bill was ruled out; everything would wait on a hypothetical comprehensive Act whose scope would depend on the financial situation at the end of the war. Capitalism had spoken. Sir William Beveridge, listening in the gallery with his head between his hands, then went out.

MR. GANDHI'S FAST

"We touch here not only the Greek notion of tragedy but the deepest springs of religion. In particular the motif of suffering is central to the Christian religion . . . . It is this potent principle of suffering on which Gandhi has based his novel technique of reform. He makes himself a sufferer in order to move the sympathy and gain the support of others for the cause he has at heart. Where ordinary political methods or reasoning and persuasion fail, he falls back on this new technique, based on the ancient practices of India and the East . . . . It is Gandhi's distinctive contribution to political method." From Gandhi's Political Method *by Field-Marshal J. C. Smuts.*

THE ordinary Englishman can scarcely be blamed if he shrugs his shoulders when he reads the correspondence between the Viceroy and Gandhi, and learns that the Mahatma is beginning a three-weeks fast. The arguments and the technique are alike outside the range of his experience. Mr. Bevin does not force the Catering Bill through the House of Commons by entering upon a fast in order to induce a sense of sin in Sir Douglas Hacking. The Western world has never understood Gandhi's religion; it is completely alien to our rational, pugnacious and materialist tradition. True, Gandhi's ideas are in accordance with the teachings of Christ, from which, indeed, they partly derive. But Western man, at least in the last three hundred years, has accepted a creed of progress through material welfare which has left no place for the mystical side of Christianity. The doctrine of atonement, the efficacy of prayer and fasting, the spiritual power of suffering—these concepts remain in the creeds, but they no longer sway lives and policies in the West. Gandhi's revival of the doctrine of voluntary suffering as a means of reconciliation and atonement now seems as odd and impracticable to us as it did to the Romans, who, in hanging Christ on a cross, thought merely to rid themselves of another jewish agitator.

To discuss the anthropological and psychological basis of fasting would be interesting, but lengthy and unhelpful. Gandhi has taken this primitive and especially Eastern custom and given it a new content. He speaks of it in his correspondence with the Viceroy as an essential religious duty when his patience in argument is exhausted. He also refers to it as an appeal to a "higher tribunal" for the justice which the British have denied. The Viceroy argues, as most Englishmen would, that it is simply "political blackmail." Blackmail, that is, in the sense that it is a weapon which may force acquiescence when reason and persuasion have failed. Gandhi could reasonably reply that if this were in fact his object, he would be doing no more by his fast than the British do by firearms—which are at least as irrelevant as fasting to the rights and wrongs of the dispute. But in fact Gandhi has always strenuously denied that his fast is intended to blackmail or bully his opponent into surrender; he hopes to win by conversion, not by coercion.

In various writings on the subject of fasting Mr. Gandhi has tried to make his position clear. If, he says, he were merely indulging in a "hunger strike," if fasting were frequently resorted to by those who do not understand its meaning, if the most careful efforts are not made to explain its significance to those against whom the fast is directed, then fasting would be very wrong. He fasts when his religion compels him to do so; it is the ultimate weapon which may give reason and persuasion another chance and so avoid the dangerous lapse into violence. The object of the fast is partly to purify and hence give spiritual power to the man who fasts, and partly to bring home to those against whom the fast is directed that they are wrong. This is what Gandhi means when he refers to the higher tribunal. He is appealing to the conscience of the Viceroy and the British to recognise that in the present dispute they are in the wrong. If, he insists, it can be shown he is wrong, if, for instance, it is proved specifically that the leaders of Congress are responsible for the violence now proceeding in India, he will readily acknowledge his fault. The correspondence with the Viceroy turns primarily on this question of responsibility.

India is a long way away, very little Indian news reaches the British press, the actual Indian situation is quite beyond British imagination. That to an Indian the situation may really seem to have arisen from British and not Indian fault does not occur to most English people. We are conscious of good intentions towards India; it is in everyone's memory that Sir Stafford Cripps, whose sincerity nobody doubts, did his best to reach a settlement. Perhaps we shall understand the Indian view more easily if we remember that we have made many promises in the past, particularly in the last war, which Indians do not believe to have been fulfilled. Again, no politically conscious Indian forgets that at the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 the British declared war on Germany on India's behalf without consultation with representative Indians; three hundred and eighty million Indians were in fact brought into the war exactly as if they had no right to any say over their own destiny. In spite of that the leaders of Congress at the beginning of the war issued a remarkable statement in which they promised full support in the struggle against Fascism provided that the British war aims included independence for India. This statement was rejected by the British Government. Thirdly, British opinion forgets that, however unwise Congress' refusal of Cripps' offer may have been, the fact is that the other politically conscious groups, Muslims, Sikhs and the rest, also rejected Cripps' proposals, and any good they might have done in convincing India of British sincerity was wiped out at a stroke by subsequent statements in which the Prime Minister suggested that Congress leaders were working for Japan and declared that he would never preside over the liquidation of the British Empire.

From any other than the British point of view India looks to-day like an occupied country. Perhaps we can explain the point most easily by referring to the broadcasts of Subhas Chandra Bose, the pro-Axis Indian leader who escaped to Germany. He broadcasts each week to India from Berlin. The Berlin broadcasts, being rude and racy, are attractive to all seditious elements in India. Subhas Bose, we are informed, gives India the following advice: "I myself," he says, "know little about sabotage. But you must listen to an expert who does—Colonel Britton, broadcasting from London. He will tell you exactly what to do about railways and munition factories and sabotage generally. Do all that he tells you." We are assured by a visitor who has recently arrived here that Colonel Britton has had an eager audience in India.

It is possible that this advice from an expert in sabotage may account for some of the acts of violence which, according to official spokesmen, showed a remarkable degree of technical skill. Some inkling of the condition of India as an occupied country may come to us from the answer given last week in the House of Commons when Mr. Amery stated that sixty thousand Indians had been arrested up to last December, that thirty-nine thousand were then still in gaol, that the police had been obliged to fire on Indian crowds no less than 470 times, and that the troops had opened fire on 68 occasions.

It is this question of Congress violence which Gandhi emphasises in justifying his decision to fast. The Viceroy assumes throughout the correspondence that the leaders of Congress are themselves responsible for acts of violence, but Gandhi, who has never approved of violence and who endangered his life by a former fast directed against his own followers when violence developed out of the Satyagraha movement, asks for evidence of Congress responsibility for violence to-day. He fastens as he has always done, on one particular moral issue. He has seen no proof that Congress is responsible for sabotage or for violence. The newspapers, censored and supplied with information by the authorities, he regards as inadequate proof. The statement of the Home Member, Sir Reginald Maxwell, who gave some account of sabotage and violence carried out by Congress, was, as Mr. Gandhi quite rightly said, no more than a speech by the prosecuting counsel. The defence has not been heard. Gandhi no doubt has in mind that after the arrest of the Congress leaders the police swooped down on towns and villages and carried off twenty thousand known Congress workers. That they have since been forced to arrest another forty thousand and that crowds could only be dispersed by shooting suggests that the resistance movement in India has gone beyond any organisation that can possibly have been instituted by Congress itself. Certainly the Government have removed many undesirables from the political scene, but the result of imprisoning Congress leaders has been not to prevent sabotage, but apparently to encourage every form of terrorism amongst the irresponsible. It has also given an opportunity to Subhas Bose and other Axis propagandists.

Somewhere embedded in Mr. Gandhi's mystical arguments there is almost always to be found a practical suggestion. We see it here in the passage where he pleads with the Viceroy to "make up your mind to end the impasse," and says that "if you want me to make any proposal on behalf of Congress you should put me among the Congress Working Committee members." Statesmanship, we believe, would see in this remark the opportunity for reopening discussion. It may be that Gandhi's suggestion is the last opportunity Britain will ever have of reconciliation with that vast body of Hindus, to whom the spiritual and practical significance of his fast is quite intelligible, and on whom its effects, whatever its immediate outcome, will be immense and incalculable.

DAMP SQUIB

TELL it on the air,
Tell it oversea,
Britain will prepare
Planned security.
Tell it in the street,
Pass the happy news,
Tell it to the Fleet,
Tell it to the crews,
Tell it to the crowd,
Tell it to the groups,
Now it is allowed
Tell it to the troops.
Spread it east and west,
Shout it south and north,
Set all doubts at rest,
Let the word go forth.
All can not be done
At a single bound,
But when peace is won
If the means are found,
If we can regain
Our industrial lead,
And at home restrain
Injudicious speed,
If we hold our own
In our export trade
When the cost is known,
When the risks are weighed,
If our burden's eased,
If our income rise,
If we have appeased
Private enterprise,
If we plan to do
What we can afford
Leaving details to
A Statutory Board
Backing social aims,
Straining every nerve,
Meeting public claims
With a wise reserve,
Let us rest content,
Sometime, if we can,
We shall implement
Half the Beveridge Plan.

SAGITTARIUS

A LONDON DIARY

SOME day the rumour that Hitler has been deposed or killed will be true. It follows naturally from his obvious failure as a general, his silence on January 30th, and the efforts that are being made by the rulers of Germany to prepare the way for a peace with Hitler out of the way. Göring, you will remember, talked of a deal which would be possible "with gentlemen but not with Bolsheviks." From Scandinavia the news reaches me that the Germans have suddenly become very anxious not to stir up trouble—their line is now reconciliation between the patriotic opposition and the Quisling party, and the Quisling Norwegian Press has been told to "refrain from unbalanced attacks on England." In brief, the Nazi plan is to hold out, on a far distant line, perhaps on the Polish frontier, and to try to make peace with Britain and the United States lest Europe should be Bolshevised. Feelers are pushed out through a variety of channels. Laval and Vichy have always had good contacts and friends in Washington and Wall Street, while Ciano is now stationed at the very centre of Catholic Fascism at the Vatican. Such moves, through the Vatican, Spain and Portugal and elsewhere will be continued, perhaps with suitable changes at the top of the Nazi régime. A mere "unconditional surrender" conference at Casablanca will not deter the Nazi leaders.

* * *

As the prospect of Nazi defeat improves the problems of national unity become more acute. The profound peace of war will give way to the bitter disharmonies of prospective peace. In this country we are probably now enjoying a more peaceful time than we shall know for years to come. The revolt of the majority of Conservative members not directly in Government pay over the Catering Bill and the Beveridge struggle are only the first significant symptoms. Everyone discusses how the parties will group. Mr. Attlee, who has ceased to mean anything at all as Labour Party leader, would make a good peer. Mr. Morrison is making a powerful bid for leadership. His last speech, which showed the influence of a highly competent economist, was an effort to state the possibilities for Great Britain after the war on the assumption that something like "national unity" remained. His speech was a reminder to the Left that Britain's economic life will be conditioned by her relations with America and Europe. Short of a Socialist revolution, he implied, which would make us dependent on the Soviet Union, the limits of change are sharply define

* * *

Mr. Morrison, it seemed to me, was envisaging a situation in which a centre party of progressive elements in the Labour Party, the more realistic Tories and the Liberals could form a government, with the extremists on both flanks. A letter from a close student of the last twenty-five years indicates that there are dangers as well as advantages in such an outlook. Referring to our leading article in this paper last week about "We and They," my friend writes: "Over the week-end I was reading a number of studies dealing with the advance of German monopoly capitalism in the '20s, under the Weimar Republic, when the German Social Democrats surrendered one position after another for the sake of maintaining national unity. I was struck by certain similarities between the social economic changes taking place in this country to-day and those in Germany twenty years ago." Moral? That gradualism, if it is part of a steady determination to advance to a Socialist goal as opportunities arise is often correct policy. But gradualism which is a series of concessions from fear of losing office or of being involved in tough and dangerous struggles is a fatal disease of social democracy.

* * *

A cloud lifts as one hears that Rostov and Kharkov as well as Stalingrad are back in Russian hands; soon we may hope Dnepropetrovsk too will be free of Nazis. Rostov is a singularly happy memory with me. We had travelled down through the parched and rather desolate Ukraine in the great heat of the summer of 1932. Suddenly, with surprising contrast, Rostov gave the feeling of a Mediterranean town. Young men and women in gay summer clothes walked about and listened to music at night, and the monotonous and stodgy diet (we had been shockingly well fed in view of Soviet conditions in 1932) was suddenly transformed. We had honey for tea. And then I recall Kharkov. The great new square, which was to become familiar from photographs since, was only being built then. But already Kharkov showed signs of becoming a fine modern city with architecture far above that which was then common in the U.S.S.R. Now, I suppose those buildings must be rebuilt. Most vivid of all is my memory of Stalingrad. The immense new tractor factory was on our official schedule; if I remember rightly it was advertised as being a foot or so longer than Ford's works at Detroit. But when we arrived we were told that we could not visit the factory. Immediately those who were most suspicious among us (David Low drew their portraits in *Low's Russian Sketchbook*) decided that the whole thing was phoney and that we were not to see the factory because conditions were so appalling. After a tremendous hullabaloo we were taken to the factory and allowed to go over part of it. A Russian engineer with American experience showed us the shops; there were women, only recently recruited from the land, working steam-hammers and the like. It was obvious that everything was still very much in the trial and error stage. No complete tractors were coming off the belt; only parts were being made, and these apparently very spasmodically. Plenty to corroborate the delighted pessimism of the capitalists amongst us. I was told in confidence later that the real reason for the hesitation in letting us go to the works was that they had begun to make munitions, and that this was a secret.

* * *

We reached the Dnieper dam; it was near completion. We stayed in bare apartments which had the characteristics that Zoshchenko laughs at; that is, there were showers without roses to spray the water over you, and nothing was finished. We thought at first we were in a new hotel, only to learn that we were housed in a block of partially built workers' flats. Since then many such blocks must have been built to go with the group of factories constructed in conjunction with the great dam. I remember standing on the dam and asking for what this colossal energy was to be used. Oh, they explained, it would make power for a million workers in the factories and on the farms for miles around. But, I said, where are the million workers? The explanation that followed impressed on me the immense novelty of the Soviet idea. Lenin had said that "electricity plus Soviets equal Socialism." Well, here was a place where you could make electricity whether there were workers or not. You made it and you brought the workers to the electricity instead of the electricity to the workers. Our guide was Tolokonsky, who afterwards went to the Embassy at Washington. He said, "Don't be depressed about what you have seen in Russia to-day. What I think about is the power that the Soviet Union will have developed in ten years' time." Just how right he was we all know to-day, and the power, which lies ultimately in the capacity of ordinary people to work together to attain a common end, is still there; it will rebuild and spread the idea of Socialism in spite of the destruction of houses and buildings and engineering works.

* * *

The Midlothian election is the first occasion on which a Common Wealth candidate, standing as such, has come near to election. I gather that Tom Wintringham was handicapped by a shortage of cars after black-out. Most of the Conservative voters were easily raked in during daylight; it took real enthusiasm for working people to walk to the polls on a very dirty night. To me the interesting question is whether Wintringham's vote is just to be taken as a disillusioned, anti-Conservative vote that could equally have gone to any opposition candidate who made, as Wintringham did, a good impression; or whether, as Acland thinks, the country is in a mood specially to respond to a whole-hearted, full-blooded Socialist appeal. In effect Common Wealth says: "We want Soviet Socialism plus our own British political democracy." Is this now practical politics?

* * *

General Willans, whose death was announced at the beginning of last week, was among the far-sighted and energetic members of the British Staff. Without his support and the backing of Sir Ronald Adam I doubt if ABCA would ever have gone through, or Army Education, which is by no means all ABCA, have reached the promising beginnings that it has achieved. General Willans was head of "Education" and "Welfare." It is clear, I think, that the successor to General Willans should not take on both these functions. They should be divided between two thoroughly competent people. There may be one or two high military figures competent to take on the education job which General Willans has been doing, but I myself favour the appointment of a well-known educationalist with academic rather than military experience. It is of great importance that the appointment should not be merely a routine War Office or Conservative Central Office affair. Army Education is only beginning and it will become of more importance at the end of the war. At the head of it must be a man who believes in Education and understands its relation to Democracy. In these days one often remembers Admiral Fisher's remark that the British Empire would disappear some time because it would be Buggins's turn. Buggins must not be allowed to get this job. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to R. Lewis.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

A B.B.C. official stated that there was no likelihood of a woman being appointed to his [Mr. Alvar Lidell's] job. Pressed to say why, he replied: "She might have to read bad news."—*Reynold's News.*

A meeting of protest against Sunday opening of theatres, which was convened by the Lord's Day Observance Society, was held at Caxton Hall yesterday . . . The meeting prayed for the defeat in Parliament of the "God-dishonouring proposals," and one prayer asked that "God would deal with Ivor Thomas as he dealt with Saul of Tarsus." Mr. Thomas, Labour M.P. for Keighley, asked the Home Secretary in December to prevent the banning of "wholesome" Sunday entertainment.—*Times.*

Saying he was in favour of Rome being bombed, Councillor R. Richards, who was yesterday installed as President of Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce, told the members that Eastbourne people considered Eastbourne was as beautiful as Rome. He had been in several Italian towns, and he considered that they had got nothing compared with this country.—*Sussex Daily News.*

Coun. E. T. Rhodes observed that there were in the fiction section of libraries a proportion of books which contained ejaculations and expressions as "Good Lord" and "My God." Such expressions were not in good taste, and he asked the chairman if anything could be done to eliminate such books, or at least reduce their number.—*Hull Daily Mail.*

OUR NORWEGIAN ALLY

[Czechoslovakia will be the subject of our next study of the resistance movement in Europe. *Our Allies in Yugoslavia* appeared in our issue of February 6th.]

NOWHERE in occupied Europe have the Nazis outraged and alienated every section of public opinion so completely as they have in Norway. Their most generous estimate could not claim the allegiance of more than 2 per cent. of the whole population. Their failure is reflected in a propaganda of desperation. They appeal to the Norwegians to join the Nasjonal Samling (the Norwegian Nazi Party) as "Norway's only way to salvation." Senator Otte, Chief of the Economic Section of the Reichskommissariat, told the readers of the *Deutsche Zeitung in Norwegen* that the basic idea of Norway's economy was the discontinuance of Norway's transocean trade after the war! Norway's economic backwardness, the same writer explained, was due to the fact that Britain had forced her to buy her coal from this country.

The Minister of Culture and Enlightenment, Rolf J. Fuglesang has made little headway in his efforts to apply Nazi race-theory to his own countrymen. His favourite theme is the need for a powerful Germanic race which he sees as the only alternative to a Europe crushed between the two millstones of a strong Asiatic *raum* and an American *raum*. Norway, he tells a sceptical audience, is confronted by a gigantic struggle between the Nordic "Prinzip" and the "Jewish-Capitalistic and Bolshevik Prinzip." The outcome of the struggle would and must be a United Europe in which the Germanic race would co-operate for common aims. Another Norwegian Quisling, Hr. Prytz, the Minister of Finance, plays up the chief bogy—the U.S.S.R. Russia, in Tzarist days, he said in one speech, had had its eyes on Trondheim as "a natural harbour for Asia on the Atlantic coast," and implied that Soviet policy had the same objective. After the Casablanca Conference, Quisling followed his master's voice in Berlin and conjured up the terrible things which would follow a German defeat. The Red Armies, he prophesied, would not be satisfied with Finland. They would march on the shores of the Atlantic and fulfil the Soviet dream of a "Scandinavian Federated Soviet Republic," with a "North Norwegian Soviet Republic" as a part of it. It was no use believing that America or Britain could save them from Bolshevism; only Germany could do this.

The great majority of the Norwegian people have demonstrated their hatred of Nazi "protection" by resistance which is marked by great courage and by an extraordinary unanimity. Take the case of the Trade Unions. The Nazi technique was permeation instead of the dissolution they enforced in the case of the political parties. Quislings and Nazi Commissars were given the key positions and ordinary trade union activity gradually came to a standstill. But the spirit of "free trade unionism" was never crushed. It remained loyal, and when circumstances demanded it, a wave of disciplined opposition swept the country. When, for instance, the Nazis tried to conscript labour for the building of fortifications, strategic roads and railways, airfields and naval bases, they were faced with such resistance that the Directorate of an airfield north of Narvik complained in a circular to all the firms involved that "the productivity of labour on some of the building sites has sunk to an absolute minimum on account of the action of the workers." The climax of trade union resistance came last summer when Quisling planned to form a Labour Front, to summon a Fascist Assembly on September 25th, to make "peace" with Hitler and then to mobilise the Norwegian youth for war against the Axis. The underground leaders of the trade unions, who keep contact with and give guidance to the workers, published full details of Quisling's scheme. The illegal paper, *Free Trade Unionism*, of August 15th carried the statement: "If the Labour Front is formed a contribution strike will come into operation immediately, and every single genuine trade unionist in our country will send a protest against membership of the Labour Front." Quisling took the first step on September 10th. Two days later a special edition of *Free Trade Unionism* was distributed all over the country. "Out of the Unions" was its advice. Thousands of letters of resignation began to pour in. The workers won. Quisling had to announce the cancellation of his scheme on the feeble grounds that "the circumstances were not favourable." This strike of 350,000 workers is one of the outstanding successes of the resistance movement in Europe.

Professional workers have shown the same kind of toughness. Less than six months after military collapse, the Justices of the Supreme Court resigned in a body as a protest against the Nazi violation of the independence of the judiciary. Later, when the quislings set up a Lawyers' Association under a Nazi commissar, and made it compulsory, about 95 per cent. of the legal profession refused to belong to it; the decree allowing only members to exercise their profession was subsequently withdrawn.

Norwegian teachers have written a new page in the fight for liberty. "You are spoiling my game," Quisling said to a secondary school near Oslo last June. "You are preventing me from concluding peace with Germany. It is the teachers' fault that Norway is not regaining her freedom." It was an unexpected testimonial to the teaching profession which refused to be nazified. In the spring of 1942, after various efforts to win them over had failed, Quisling decreed compulsory membership of a Teachers' Labour Front. Out of 14,000 teachers, over 12,000 rejected the decree.

Parents and children joined in the protest in a moving display of solidarity with the teachers. The Chief of the S.S. and Gestapo forces in Norway were called in to arrest 700 of the teachers, and many of them were sent to labour camps and prisons. The last of them were released only in November, 1942. To-day, the crisis in the schools is officially at an end. But many official notices of educational difficulties—shortage of accommodation, of teachers, of fuel—point to a sorry state of education in a country which has long prided itself on its educational system.

To the Trade Unionists, the Lawyers and the Teachers we must add the Norwegian Church. The struggle began in 1941 when the police department announced the abolition of the oath of secrecy. "To abolish this Magna Carta of conscience," Bishop Berggrav and six of his colleagues wrote, "is an attack upon the very heart of the Church." Pastoral letters followed and congregations stood firmly behind their leaders. When the Church struggle against nazification reached a climax in April, 1942, only 27 out of 1,100 clergy gave their allegiance to the quisling church authorities. In these extraordinary circumstances, the militant clergy have formed their own Church Council with which the Quislings have been forced into discussion. This Provisional Church Council was pronounced illegal last August, but in September the quisling church authorities asked it to send representatives to negotiate! The Provisional Church Council was powerful enough to refuse the political manoeuvres behind this request which became plain as soon as negotiations began. Last November it issued a protest against the wave of anti-semitism; throughout the country congregations heard from the pulpits the protest addressed to Quisling. "The Church cannot be silent when God's commandment is trampled underfoot. . . . stop the racial hate which is being spread in our country."

And so the Church struggle goes on. Every day clergy are banished from their homes and put in prison. Bishops have to report daily to the police, "in order to prevent their acting as agitators among the clergymen and congregations." Fuel is refused for the churches. Recently, only four out of 220 theological students agreed to ordination by quisling "bishops."

To the workers and lawyers, the teachers and the clergy must be added many thousands of other Norwegians whose opposition to fascism remains unbroken; the 300,000 members of sports organisations who since November, 1940, have refused to take part in games run by the Quisling party; thousands of men and women who distribute illegal papers and individuals and groups of people who help their countrymen to escape to Britain and to join up with the Norwegian Navy in keeping open the shipping lines of the Allies. Together, they are united, as King Haakon once said "like a strong wall."

Where and what it may be asked, is the strength of the Nazis in Norway? The Nazi Party, the Nasjonal Samling, claims about 35,000 members (out of 2,900,000 people), some of whom at any rate, were members who planned Quisling's easy access to power. A certain number of industrialists have preferred the short-sighted temporary profits of collaboration in iron mines and aluminium production. Together they constitute no more than 2 per cent. of the population. To this small number must be added 400,000 Germans, military and civilians, in many parts of the country, manning one of the largest "U" boat bases at Trondheim, building fortifications and communications where Norwegian labour is not enough or is not to be trusted. This enormous German population helps to build up the most dangerous of Hitler's allies, namely hunger. No-one has yet died of hunger, one quisling propagandist said proudly, but he failed to add that most people were hungry. The Germans in Norway have to be fed—on Norwegian produce; they have confiscated stocks of fat and whale-oil and fish; they have requisitioned large quantities of meat and about one-seventh of Norwegian cattle.

Illness, malnutrition and hunger help Hitler, and, in time, weaken resistance. The Norwegians, like the peoples of other occupied countries to-day, hope that their liberation will not be too long postponed. But—and it is important that we should understand this—the Norwegians have taken the political tragi-comedy of North Africa to heart. "The Darlan incident," a leading article in the *Norsk Tidend* wrote, "also has its significance for Norway and the other countries. Political and military aims must go hand in hand, otherwise we shall find ourselves on a slippery slope. Our aim, a free and democratic Norway, can never be achieved by a fascist compromise. No good Norwegian has ever had any doubts about this, and he will never agree to it."

THE STATE AND INDUSTRY

[This is the third and concluding article of our series on "full employment," which, it is argued, can be theoretically assured in a system half-way to Socialism; it is for psychological reasons, we suggest, that this technical possibility is unlikely to be realised.]

IN the two previous articles in this series we have examined certain of the implications of a policy of "full employment" and have tried to furnish a provisional answer to the frequent question whether there is a practicable resting-point between capitalism as we have known it in the past and the Socialist economic system which we ourselves regard as, in the long run, the only effective instrument for solving the major problems of twentieth-century production and distribution of wealth. We must now inquire briefly how the tentative answers which we have made fit in with what is being propounded in those capitalist circles where plans for a brave new world are being made. The two most important pronouncements of this order are the manifesto recently issued in the name of 120 leading industrialists under the title "A National Policy for Industry" and the pamphlet on "The Problem of Unemployment" still more recently published under Unilever auspices. The somewhat earlier manifestos of the Federation of British Industries and the Chambers of Commerce can be ignored for the present purpose; for in relation to the matters we have been

discussing they said practically nothing. As against this, both the "120" and "Unilever" accept almost without qualification the need for extensive State measures for the prevention of unemployment, including both monetary policies of the sort we have ourselves advocated and extensive "public works" designed to maintain the volume of investment in periods of threatening depression.

So far, so good; but at this point divergence begins, not merely between our view and that of the exponents of the new capitalism, but also among these exponents themselves. The "120" are prepared to contemplate both a considerable (albeit undefined) extension of the sphere of public operation of industry, provided that this takes the form of "Public Corporations" and not of civil service control, and also a substantial regulation of monopolistic practices and of any capitalist policies designed to restrict output or to maintain prices at an unreasonable level. As against this the Unilever pamphlet, while calling upon the State to do a great many things for the purpose of maintaining employment, appears to reject out of hand any sort of State control over privately owned industry, and puts the entire emphasis, apart from the measures of State action for stimulating industry (or for repressing booms in case of need) on the action of the industrialists themselves. Complete self-government for the capitalists appears to be contemplated, without any State control or interference with their doings. There is no recognition corresponding to that of the "120" of the need to prevent industrialists from abusing their powers so as to create scarcity instead of plenty and counteract by monopolistic practices any steps the State may take by monetary action or by "public works" to keep unemployment at a satisfactorily low level.

This difference is the more significant, because in other respects there is so much common to the two pronouncements. The "120," as well as the Unilever spokesman, are great believers in the virtues of profit-seeking capitalist enterprise, in the desirability of close association on the part of business men, both in industrial and trade associations and generally over a wide field, and in the capacity of industry of its own free will to serve the public instead of seeking to exploit it. But the "120" go some way in recognising that there are exceptions, and that the public cannot be asked to trust the industrialists with large powers of compulsory regulation of their affairs without safeguards against the abuse of the extensive authority they propose to assume.

The "120" are, in this respect, a long way ahead of the "Unilever" spokesman. But we are not greatly reassured. It would be indispensable, we believe, within the general framework of their proposals, to go a great deal farther than they have declared themselves ready to go in placing each industry that desires to organise itself in an inclusive association and to enjoy either any form of State assistance or the right to exercise any compulsory powers under a constitutional code. This would embody provision for continuous public scrutiny of costs and prices, for representation in its counsels of the public and of the workers and not merely of the capitalist interests directly concerned. Also for government endorsement or rejection of any proposal to exercise compulsory powers over output, or prices, or the entry of new firms into the industry, or any other matter that might be made the means of monopolistic restriction or the fixing of profit-margins unduly high.

We believe, in effect, that for every considerable industry the future form of organisation should be either a Public Corporation, involving a transfer of the industry to public ownership and non-bureaucratic public operation, or, where this is not deemed necessary or expedient, the institution of a form of public control strong enough to ensure the industry's compliance with public requirements in respect of prices, output, employment, investment, and, in general, economic planning designed to ensure "full employment" and a progressive improvement in the standard of life. We envisage this State control being exercised through a Minister with power to sanction or veto the decisions on such matters of a publicly appointed Board representing not only the capitalist interests concerned, but also the workers and the State, under a chairman who should be the State's nominee and should have no profit-interest of his own in any firm falling within the industry over whose fortunes he would preside.

We do not suggest that all industries which are left in private hands should be immediately subjected to precisely this form of public control. We do, however, hold that this, or something like it, is the appropriate form of organisation for all *major* industries which are to be left within the realm of profit-seeking enterprise. And certainly that nothing less than this must be required wherever any capitalist industry seeks to exercise, either by legal grant or *de facto*, any compulsory powers over production or prices or capacity or the terms on which new firms may be set up. We hold, too, that for all industries, whether they are organised in this way or not, there will have to be some form of tribunal before which any aggrieved person can bring a complaint of unfair pricing, of discrimination in prices or supplies, or of any other monopolistic practice calculated to impede "full employment" or the reasonable satisfaction of the consumers' needs.

If, but only if, the capitalist interests are prepared to accept regulation of this sort, we can see the possibility of a "halfway house," such as we tried to describe in the second article of this series. Our point is that State control must be real, strong and pervasive—not a mere pretence that will leave fair words to cover up foul deeds.

We hold this, while associating ourselves fully with the dislike of the "120" for bureaucratic administration. The Civil Service, we agree, cannot be put in the place of the capitalists as the director of industrial operations. Any substantial extension of State control over capitalist industry must involve very great alterations in the personnel and methods of government departments where industries are to be taken under public operation. The Public Corporation and not the civil service department provides the appropriate model. We agree that those who are made responsible for the management of industrial concerns must be protected against continual interference with their day-to-day doings; but not that they must be left to determine their own higher policy without any superior control. It is necessary, not only to take a number of particular industries and services out of the hands of the profit-seekers, and to reorganise them as public concerns, but also to provide for their effective working in relation to a general economic plan laid down by the State, through its own organs of collective economic control. Industries which are not taken over must be so organised that they too conform to the requirements of the general plan, leaving outside the scope of this regulation only such lesser industries as are still competitive enough to afford no foothold for monopoly control.

If these terms are broadly acceptable to the reformers among the capitalists, they and the Socialists can begin to talk business with some hope of arriving at a reasonable accommodation, with "full employment" as a commonly accepted objective and a mutual desire to avoid resorting to extremes. But it seems to us that even the most advanced groups among the capitalists have still a long way to travel before they can be regarded as even attempting to meet the Socialists halfway, and that the Socialists, for their part will be right to be on their guard against fine phrases about the spirit of service, which may cover up desires to secure full legal sanction for monopoly, or even to rebuild capitalism on a semi-Fascist, corporative basis.

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THE "ORDINARY PEOPLE" SPEAK

[These conversations with the villagers of P'ing Min Hsien, or "Ordinary People's County," after the Yellow River floods above Tungkwan in August, 1942, have come direct from an English resident in China.]

A couple of weeks ago I made a quick trip up to a new Yellow River flood district: The water came down in a great tidal wave varying from 6 to 20 feet high, and swept over a whole county before anybody knew what was happening. Only a few thousand people were drowned, partly owing to the number of trees, and partly to the buoyancy of thick, muddy water; but no crops, no grain or seed, and few houses remain in an area of 100 miles by 15 in the old river bed. This low-lying land had been unoccupied until 20 years ago, when some famine refugees settled there. Then, when war came, tens of thousands of new refugees arrived from the big 1938 Yellow River floods and from the war areas. They were just about making good by 1942, when the flood came and destroyed everything again.

The county magistrate and his staff, dressed in a medley of garments, met me outside the city. "Excuse our appearance," said the magistrate, "but we all lost our clothes in the flood." The city wall had been washed away, and all but a few houses. "We were only a small hsien to begin with, and poor," he continued, "but we were just beginning to look like something after three years' hard work. Now that's all finished overnight. Two things are left, though. One is the trees we planted; the other you'll see later—the spirit of the people and their desire to rebuild. So these at least remain of our three years' reconstruction and education work. They are the symbols of our past work, and the hope of our future."

As we walked in at the hsien government gate, Magistrate Wang waved his hand airily towards some mud. "My reception room," he remarked; and, over in another direction, "Here is the Educational Department, and the Economic Research Department," indicating equally formless piles of mud. A wooden pole had been placed across from the fork of one tree to that of another. "My two secretaries spent the night upon that perch," continued the magistrate. "The accountants were up in that tree over there, and the self-defence corps soldiers made a platform in the trees outside their house. The trees saved everybody."

"How about yourself?" I asked.

"I was up on the roof of our new office buildings," he replied. "I had a ladder put up against the roof, and pushed women and children up until the roof was full, and the water nearly on us. Then I went up myself and climbed over to the north side to watch the flood come.

"There was a terrific roar by that time, and a stench from the muddy water like rain on dry mud, only a hundred times stronger. Then we saw a white wall (it was just dusk) rushing towards us. There was a horrible jumble of agonised noises—donkeys and mules braying, oxen bellowing, pigs screeching, dogs barking, women shrieking, children crying, men shouting, and trees cracking under the weight of rocks and coal being trundled down from up-stream; and all the time the roar of the water. By next morning at dawn the water was only a few feet deep, but still running fast; by eleven o'clock we could come down and wade through the mud. To-morrow you will see for yourself the desolation we found everywhere."

Next day I started off on a tour of inspection. In the first village I came to, thirty out of a population of one hundred and fifty had been drowned. Not a single house or part of a house was left in the village, which is now a mud flat on which some trees are growing.

"What happened when you saw the water coming?" I asked a peasant. "Why didn't you run away?" "The soldiers ran up to the high land in time, so we could have done, too, really," was the reply, "but, you see, we are the

people. We have our houses, crops and animals. We hoped the flood would not be too big, and we stayed. By the time we could see how big the water would be, it was too late. All we could do was to tie ourselves to the trees and wait."

A peasant in another village where mules and oxen and two thousand pigs had been swept away, said, "In our village a man is lucky if he gets one meal of soup a day. Over fifty households have gone away to become beggars in the last three days. If we don't get grain seed within three weeks the district won't recover for five years. If we can get our grain in, we'll have hope and stay by it—even if we are all almost starved to death before harvest comes."

Then there was Liu Ching-teh, a woman aged 28, who clung to an ox-cart with her whole family and was carried downstream for miles on it. "We tied the cart to a tree before the water came, but as our village is a new one the tree was small, and the flood dragged the cart and tree away together. I was holding my baby, but I swallowed so much water that I became unconscious and let him go. My father and husband and two children are all drowned."

"How do you live now?" I asked. "When we can beg anything to eat, the great difficulty is how to cook it. The whole village has only one or two small cooking pots saved, so we all have to use them in turn."

Ho Chih-Chuin, aged six, could speak enough to tell me that his father and mother had been carried away, and he didn't know where they were. Clinging to a piece of timber all night, this little chap had crossed the Yellow River from Occupied to Free China! Two brothers Wang told me they had been carried nearly to the far side of the river by the current, and had managed to reach land by swimming. They were pulled out by Japanese soldiers on the East bank, suspected of being spies, and imprisoned. At night they escaped and jumped back into the river, with which they were very familiar, managing to swim across to the bend of the river on the South-West bank in Free China, and walk back to their own village.

One old lady, a refugee from the Yellow River floods of 1938, was swept off the roof of her house, clutching her small grandson. Several hours later she crawled out unhurt, and still with a live grandson, fifteen miles downstream. "I escaped him (the river) twice already," she said, "I'm not afraid of him any more."

"I was told that my ox had been found on the flats about ten miles away, soon after flood," the villager who was my guide remarked. "But I didn't go to see." "Why not?" "Because three of my children were still missing. There's no point in looking about for your oxen when you can't find your children." This was while we were still on our way to his village. I shouldn't have known we had arrived there, later, unless he had told me.

"Here's our village," he said, walking up a slight mound on the mud plain which seemed to stretch to the foot of the mountains on the far side of the river. "That bit of house there is our new school. The people's houses, not built so strongly, were swept away, and what remained was buried under the mud. About six hundred out of our eight hundred population came back again from the various places down river where the flood had taken them, but when they saw the state of our village they just went right away again to start begging. There are only forty of us left."

We walked over to a tree under which some people were gathered round an ox-cart filled with flood-borne coal. An old woman was sitting by herself, crying. "What's she crying about?" asked the head man. "She has just got back here after walking all the way (nearly fifty miles) from Tungkwan," someone replied. "And now she finds the village like this, and her house under the mud."

The villagers went through their families, counting casualties on their fingers for me to note down: "The Kao family of 7, only 1 left; the Sun family of 5, only 1 left; The Li family, 2 out of 6 left; the Wang family, 1 out of 5 left; the Sung family, 3 out of 8 left; the Chu family 2 out of 6 left." Then we came to a family who had only lost two. "You don't need to write that down," the head man told me. "We nearly all lost *two*. Write down the serious things to tell them."

Some women were crying again, and even the children, up to that time very proud of themselves for having survived, looked solemn. I changed the subject. "How about organising co-ops. for spinning and weaving? That would give you a way of earning money for food?"

"If you can give us looms," they said, "we'll know how to use them. In our old homes everybody can spin and weave. In our village here about thirty-six families have made looms, and more were being built all the time. Now not even one is left, nor any spinning wheels."

"I have cried so much, I just can't cry any more," laughed a woman with merry wrinkles round her eyes. "We had mass cries, and individual cries, and now I can still cry but no more tears will come. I have cried my eyes dry. So if you will help us to get looms and earn our own living, we'll be very grateful, I'm sure." The villagers stood by, sceptical, but inclined to be hopeful, while I took a photo of them standing on what had once been their village.

I had enough material to report now, so I mounted my bicycle, and set off for home with the last words of the old woman ringing in my ears. "*So if you will help us to get looms and earn our own living, we'll be very grateful, I'm sure.*"

Grain, loans, spinning-wheels, and all the other means of livelihood, for an area one hundred miles by fifteen! What could be done about it?

AYLWIN HOGG

A RELIGIOUS PANTOMIME

ON February 2nd the Arts Theatre (Great Newport Street, near Leicester Square Tube: Tel.: Temple 7541) revived *Androcles and the Lion*. These circumstantial particulars may be useful because it was only to run for a month, and the play is wartime entertainment of the first order. True, the performance is not first rate, but it is good enough to transmit Shaw's fun at its very best (there are fewer thistles for donkeys than usual), also his humane penetration. What we are going through now makes us sensitive to this religious pantomime.

Before *Androcles and the Lion* (1913) he had written two plays in which conversion was a main theme, *Major Barbara* and *Blanco Posnet*, and one farce, *Fanny's First Play*, where the heroine's first religious experience led her into flouting respectability.

Before, or after, going to *Androcles and the Lion*, I recommend reading Shaw's postscript to it—not the preface which, like so many others, is concerned with matters that never get into the play at all. As Mr. E. Strauss has pointed out in his excellent book, Bernard Shaw's *Art and Socialism* (Gollancz, 6s.), those famous prefaces have been repositories for opinions which he not only often failed to support, but sometimes even confounded—as a dramatist. Of course a dramatist cannot create human beings unless he lets them go their way, and the upshot may not be at all what the author would prefer to prove. "All my articulate Christians," he says in that postscript, "the reader will notice, have different enthusiasms which they accept as the same religion only because it involves them in common opposition to the official religion and consequently in a common doom."

This is the major conflict in *Androcles and the Lion*; its substance is the contrast between these different types, all in conflict with the powers that be, who use a state-religion as a cloak to disguise their indifference to everything except the preservation of the social order. In drawing them Shaw's insight, humour and what may be called his chivalry (it is the quality in him I love most) are at their best. Yet when the play was first performed this superb merit in the presentation of these types was pitched on as a damning defect. Because the chaotic Ferrovius bawled like a vulgar hot-gospeller, the meek little Androcles talked namby-pamby, and Spintho was held up to contempt, the critics concluded that the dramatist intended to satirise religion in these men. *Blanco Posnet* had been censored shortly before by the Lord Chamberlain as blasphemous. In it a horse-stealer, burning in the fires of conversion, had expressed his emotions in words which did not regard the forms of conventional reverence. Now to allow good taste and convention to get between you and the recognition of the thing you profess to reverence is a real kind of blasphemy. It may be worse. I am no theologian. I have never been able to make out what the sin against the Holy Ghost exactly is, but from the context where it is mentioned, it seems to be some kind of wilful obtuseness or unfairness—the acme (to put it secularly) of spiritual blindness. Now the merits of Bernard Shaw as a creator are largely due to his being entirely free from spiritual snobbery. He has, heaven knows, blind spots, but whatever he admires in human nature, that he will perceive and honour, however smothered it may be in vulgarity or silliness. Hence the superb merit of his handling of the Christians in this play. Ferrovius is the type of overwhelmingly muscular Christian; the internally distraught fighting parson or preacher, whose religious life apart from taking others by the scruff of the neck and compelling them to come in, is a continual vain struggle to acquire Christian benevolence and inner freedom and peace. He was born a servant of Mars, and until the arena revealed him to himself, he supposed himself to be a follower of Jesus of Nazareth. Before that revelation he had been deeply shocked by Lavinia, the patrician Christian, when she had told him she would like to see him fight his way to heaven. But after he has let himself go in the arena and laid out six gladiators, and the delighted Emperor has offered him a post in his praetorian guard, he sadly concludes that she must be right. "The Christian god is not yet . . . I must serve the gods that are." Lavinia is the type of martyr who is ready to die while possessing the smallest amount of dogmatic belief. Heaven means little to her; purgatory and hell nothing at all. Bernard Shaw says she is "a clever and fearless free-thinker," but in the play her words do not show that. It is true the dogmas of Christianity fade from her mind when she is confronted with death, yet she feels she must die for her faith. What is that? "I don't know," she tells the Roman captain who is in love with her. "If it were for anything small enough to know, it would be too small to die for. I think I am going to die for God. Nothing else is real enough to die for." This, of course, is not free thought but mysticism. In contrast to Ferrovius, Lavinia says, "I'll strive for the coming of the God who is not yet."

It is a difficult part to play. In the first act there is a most important line which did not tell. Either the producer had not made room for it, or Miss Laffan did not realise its significance. When the captain taunts her with preferring death to life, Lavinia answers, "Death is harder for us Christians," meaning that *she* has something worth living for. It should tell—that line. It is the key to all that follows.

Now, though Lavinia is the mouthpiece of the dramatist's highest conception of religion, he, like Lavinia herself, recognises genuine religious faith in Ferrovius and Androcles; in both pacifist and warrior. Androcles who prefers "to go to the lions with the ladies," is the sort of little man (Mr. Blakelock interprets him well) who might wear fibre shoes and india-rubber coats in order to avoid using the skins of animals; yet in him there burns a flame of courage that misery and torment cannot even make flicker. He is the antithesis of Ferrovius who, if a sword is put in his hand, could, as he says, as soon throw it away "as the woman I love from my arms. Oh, what have I said! My God, what have I said?" Both are genuinely religious. Lavinia and the dramatist recognise this, and though so different, they differ still more from those who would compel them to sacrifice to Diana or Jupiter, because these men don't believe in any religion at all. If only Diana or Jupiter had stood for anything believed in, Lavinia tells her lover she would willingly have burnt a pinch of incense and knelt with him at their shrines. Symbols do not matter. But they were empty shrines and therefore she cannot—must die if necessary

As I said, *Androcles and the Lion* stands high among Shaw's religious plays. As a wartime play it could hardly be bettered because the emotions caught from it are courage and an impulse to clarify one's sense of honour—and it is gay! DESMOND MACCARTHY

THE REDFERN GALLERY

An exhibition of five-and-twenty paintings by Pasmore, mostly new, is something of an event. His last "One Man Show" happened to synchronise with the fall of France and so, not unnaturally, failed to get the attention it deserved. Since then Pasmore has made definite progress, and that, in the circumstances, is remarkable. Also he has moved in the right direction—towards perspicuity. In three such recent works as *Portrait of the Artist, Girl with Curtain,* and the small *Nude* he defines his vision more confidently than in *The Flower Barrow*, the picture which, at the time of his last exhibition, seemed to most amateurs the best thing he had done. The picture *View on the Medway* is another matter. Possibly it is the most interesting thing in the show: certainly it is not completely successful. The artist has failed to discover for his sense of the sky an equivalent that accords with the rest of the picture; and he says so frankly. No attempt here to conceal inapprehension beneath a cloud of "interesting" tones and forms. On the other hand, in rendering the cows, the water and the distant fields, he has been carried by emotion to a higher—to a more lyrical—level of expression than ever before he attained. This exhibition, delightful in itself, is further a reassuring statement about the progress of one of our best living painters.

It is a fine treat to discover in the back room a set of Picasso's designs (hand-coloured proofs) for *Le Tricorne*. Beside these miracles of taste and science the water-colours of Tchelitchew and Christopher Wood can hardly be expected to make their presence felt. Only four little scribbles by Bérard contrive, by virtue of whim and personality, to escape total eclipse. Downstairs, as usual, is to be seen a nice collection of French paintings, drawings and lithographs.

CLIVE BELL

THE MOVIES

"It's That Man Again," at the Tivoli
"Submarine Alert," at the Plaza

I have never been a fan of "Itma," and perhaps that ruled out the possibility of my enjoying the film version. The inspiration of the original has worn rather thin. "A penny for the diver, sir," "Can I do you now?" and Funf combined eerily on the wireless to create a no-man's-land of slapstick; spread out on the screen the surprises are as mechanical as trap-doors. Still, by English film standards, *It's That Man Again* has its funny moments. Mr. Handley himself, an old-fashioned character out of Phiz, has a hunted and tireless charm, and the accompanying comics are good for a turn or two. There is a pretty sequence of encounters in the black-out which ought to have taught the director (Walter Forde) where the real possibilities of his material lay. The ruined theatre provides a better background than the posh revolving stage on which this, like so many other crazy films, tamely ends. In fact a dotty wireless serial, whose chief fault is that it has gone on too long, becomes here a workmanlike but less explosive *Hellzapoppin.*

Submarine Alert is an average thriller about enemy agents giving information about shipping to submarines. The submarines operate within a mile of the American coast. The usual love-story is accompanied by the regulation roof and car chases; there is an old mill, and tortures include a steam room from which the hero and his girl are dragged out just in time. Why? So that the hero, technically an alien, may be rewarded with American citizenship, and may deliver a speech saying that America is the best country in the world. These new happy endings are tougher than the old.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"A Month in the Country," at the St. James's

This delightful and revivable play, we are told in a programme note, was written in 1850, ten years before the birth of Chehov and thirty-seven years before the production of Chehov's first play. The dates may surprise a little, but it is natural that we should think of *A Month in the Country* in terms of the later dramatist. A leisurely country life, with neighbours dropping in and love affairs springing up, walks in the garden, fireworks on the lake, the mixture of boredom and enchantment and interweaving talk, inevitably brings Chehov to mind. And, of course, Chehov owes something to Turgenev; passages in *The Seagull* bear more than an accidental imprint. Mr. MacCarthy will discuss this new production at length next week.

"The Family Reunion," at the A.D.C., Cambridge

Mr. T. S. Eliot's plays are not philosophic poems arbitrarily cast in dramatic form and unsuited to stage production. On the contrary, their full plastic effect can only be realised on the stage. They demand, indeed, a high degree of perception and intelligence in producer and actors if the balance is to be kept between the abstract and realistic elements so curiously interwoven in the poetic structure; for the sacrifice or over-emphasis of either makes the play seem precious or comic or simply unreal. But those essential qualities are pre-eminent in George Rylands's production of *The Family Reunion* at the A.D.C., and the result was a performance which held one from beginning to end by its poetry, humour and characterisation. Every part was admirably cast and acted, and the actors, all undergraduates appearing for the first time on a public stage, rendered Mr. Eliot's supple and beautiful verse as if words and rhythm were the natural language of thought instead of something disquietingly superimposed. The humours of the characters were defined without caricature and just sufficiently stylised to merge into the Chorus without discomfort. All were admirable, but Olive Gregg as the Dowager Lady Manchensey, Fanny Gatehouse as Agatha, and Pauline Hampton as Ivy were exceptionally brilliant imaginative characterisations. John Carthy coped finely with the difficult part of the hero, Harry. One suspects that this character is not quite satisfactorily conceived by the author, but the part, as it stands, is also perhaps capable of a slightly more stylised rendering, in which the bewildering impact of his divided consciousness on the "normal" characters might have some visual symbol. The apparition of the Eumenides, though ingenious and the best yet devised, one can also imagine somewhat more fluid and less defined. This brilliant production was a fascinating experience, and Mr. Rylands is more than usually to be congratulated.

SONG

Put away the flutes
Into their careful clefts,
And cut the violins that like ivy climb
Flat to their very roots;
All that a subtler time
Allowed us we must now commute
To commoner modes: for here come
The hieratic trumpet and demotic drum.
Fall in and follow, let the beat
Hyphenate your halved feet,
Feel its imbricating rhythm
Obliterating every schism
And split through which you might espy
The idiosyncratic I.
Let the assumptive trumpets pace
And pattern out the sounding space
Into stillnesses that numb
By iteration and by sum,
Till the walls of will fall down
Round the seven-times-circled town
Of your mind, and not a jot
Is left of fore or after thought.
O slowly go and closely follow
Toe to heel and hill to hollow
All the ditto feet that lead
Onward in a millipede
To the battle where, as one,
A hundred thousand tip and run.

But when the burning sun again
Behind the hill
Slides down and leaves the separate slain
Frosted and still,
Then over the rued fields, that drum and trumpet fled,
Slow musics rise like mists and wreathe their requiem
Round the bruised reeds, and coldly mounts the moon
Of thought, and rules among the quorum of the dead.

W. R. RODGERS

PRIDE WITHOUT PREJUDICE

[A reply from some Chorus Girls to Mr. Dennis Arundell]

DEAR MR. DENNIS ARUNDELL,

What a charming surprise to read your extremely erudite letter to us all. We cannot tell you how flattered we feel that you should have chosen to address us through the columns of a paper that caters for the minority who *think*. We so greatly appreciate, too, that you credit us with the ability to understand your distinguished literary style, and to interpret such expressions as "sine qua non," which those who do not know us as well as yourself might possibly consider to be above our heads.

We can assure you that your staunch admiration of us is reciprocated up to a point, but we must tell you that that point is reached when you substitute for your undoubted qualities as an actor less obvious qualities as a mentor who strives to guard us from the consequences of what he obviously considers to be our thoughtlessness and irresponsibility.

First of all you should know, Mr. Arundell, the dangers of quotations without their context, and when you state that one of our sisters remarked, "Some of the girls are married, and Sunday is the only day their husbands can get leave from the Forces," you do us poor service if you give the public the impression that a purely personal expression of opinion from one of us is our first and last word in the matter.

Is it possible, Mr. Arundell, that a slight inconsistency in Mr. Leslie Henson's speech passed you by? Did you by any chance notice that the first part of his admirable oration was devoted to telling us, among other things, that he had been a staunch advocate of Sunday openings for, we think, twenty years? Yet, almost in the next breath, he tried to convince us that this measure was to be introduced for the duration of the war only. Perhaps you, who appear to speak for so many of your colleagues, will tell us whether this inconsistency is conducive to confidence that a six-day week is, as you state he said, a *sine qua non* (forgive us for borrowing the expression).

But believe it or not, Mr. Arundell, this alleged bogy of a seven-day week is not our reason for so bitterly opposing Sunday openings.

Would it be troubling you too much, Mr. Arundell, if we asked you to tell us what makes you think that there is so great a demand for Sunday openings? We have heard a lot about crowds walking the city streets on Sundays and drinking their pay away in pubs, but we suggest, Mr. Arundell, that they do so because they like walking about together, and because they want a drink. We have noticed many people in the streets on Saturday nights, and discreet inquiries have revealed the interesting fact that there have been seats for sale at numerous box offices. Do please tell us—for we are only poor ignorant girls—why a public should be likely to visit a show on Sunday from which it has stayed away on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday?

Would it surprise you to know that a Member of Parliament at a conference recently stated publicly that, though he had had many letters from his constituents opposing Sunday openings, he had not had one demanding them, and that out of over a hundred M.P.s present not one said that he had had such a letter. Another M.P. expressed himself unable to understand whence this agitation for Sunday openings originated, and we think it was a pity no one told him. Perhaps you would care to, Mr. Arundell, as you state so glibly that it is as a result of public demand.

May we point out one or two facts about touring that appear to have escaped you? Admittedly touring actors do have to travel on Sunday, but they travel in reserved compartments at reduced fares and their scenery up to a certain amount is transported free. Is the Minister of Transport so benign that he will allow these facilities in wartime on any other day but Sunday? Perhaps you can tell us, out of your vast knowledge of affairs, his views on this matter.

Why should you suppose that landladies' tempers are any more uncertain on Sunday than on any other day, and why should you suppose that any touring actor should be foolish enough not to write ahead and order his Sunday evening meal, and thus obviate the necessity of dining expensively at an hotel?

Concerning charity shows, you do us scant justice. No one in their right mind is suggesting that we do

them every Sunday. We have all done many in our time, and indirectly helped to earn thousands of pounds for charity, but has it occurred to you that if Sunday openings become a *fait accompli* (forgive us for lapsing into French) these charity shows will cease, for with staggered week-day closings only a small percentage of stars will be available on any one night. The money will therefore be lost to these charities, for the public will only pay high prices to see a multitude of great artistes.

One warning finally, Mr. Arundell; if we may make so bold. Perhaps you do not realise what a glut of week-end performances would mean to us. Physically, by the time we have appeared in perhaps ten numbers and run up and down innumerable flights of stairs to make our quick changes, we have expended as much energy as would be required for a long route march in full kit. Therefore, until you have appeared in the chorus of a musical show, please do not venture to offer us advice, or you may leave yourself open to a certain amount of criticism, and also may be accused, if not of any worse failing, at least of prejudice.

Yours faithfully,
BETTY MARTIN
IRIS TULLY
GOLA JAMES
EUNICE CROWTHER
PEGGY WATSON

Palace Theatre, W.1.

[Mr. Dennis Arundell replies: "That an advocate of Sunday openings should be in favour of Sunday openings during wartime is not inconsistent.

"Although certain M.P.s may not have received letters in favour of the proposal, and when any new proposal is made the antis are usually more loud-mouthed than the pros, this recent agitation for Sunday openings did originate from a growing public demand. Leaving out of count the Gallup Poll (organised by the British Institute of Public Opinion) in 1941, when 67 per cent. were in favour and 26 per cent. against, military authorities have many times recently approached both Equity and the West End Managers, pleading for Sunday theatres, and certain M.P.s approached Equity to know what would be the reaction of theatrical people if Sunday opening was proposed.

"Reduced rates for touring actors are apparently at the moment available on any day of the week, and week-end travel is not encouraged. Unlike the average actor, engine drivers and bus drivers are employed the whole year round.

"To be able to criticise an egg one does not need to be able to lay an egg oneself, but the Palace girls are right that I have not been in the chorus of a musical show, and so fail to see how flights of stairs and quick changes could be more in number on a Sunday than on any other day.

"But without being gracious enough to answer my questions straightforwardly, the Palace girls have given one new reason: it is compulsion that is objected to. I quite understand! Provided he is not tired, provided he has nothing else to do, and provided he receives a nice large cheque, the actor will not mind appearing on Sunday! How many other trades and professions at the present time are allowed to be so selfish? I stand by my letter."—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

Correspondence

FAMINE RELIEF

SIR,—May I thank you for the paragraph you published in your issue of February 6th on famine relief in France.

I entirely endorse your statement that this strictly limited relief has nothing to do with the proposals of wholesale relief made in 1940. As far as Western Europe is concerned, it only aims at safeguarding the women and children from the fatal consequences of undernourishment which have increased mortality all over Belgium in the proportion of one to three, and the number of people affected by tuberculosis in the proportion of one to eight, in certain urban districts. That the situation is worsening every month, owing to the exhaustion of physical resistance and of the savings of the vast majority which allowed them formerly to supplement their scanty rations by purchases on the black market, is made evident by a number of medical reports which have reached London during the last year and which have been confirmed by the evidence of doctors who have escaped from the country as late as August-September last. Their conclusions agree with those of neutral experts, such as those of the Health Committee of the League of Nations and the Swedish Committee for the Protection of Belgian Children.

As you say, it is essential that the relief given to Greece, and which we hope will be continued in France, should be extended, under similar safeguards, to other accessible countries. The risks involved, if the German guarantee were to be violated, are infinitesimal, compared with the risk we are now running of witnessing the gradual physical and moral disintegration of millions of Allies who have endured nearly three years of oppression and hardship. The reserves of human energy are not inexhaustible, and it would be tragic if a war undertaken for the liberation of the victims of aggression and for the defence of "Christian principles" should end by plunging the people of these occupied countries in utter despair, when a little foresight and good will might still ensure their co-operation in the reconstruction of Europe.

EM. CAMMAERTS

CIVIL AVIATION

SIR,—There seems to be general agreement that the only way to avoid dangerous national rivalries in the field of air transport is to put civil aviation under international control. It is not in the power of the British Government alone to commit the United Nations to this policy. But it is possible for the Imperial Dominion Governments and the Government of India to take a joint decision now that will make the argument for international agreement on the lines we want irresistible.

Let these Governments announce that they will grant the right to fly over their territories and to use their aerodromes, to any air-lines directly controlled by the new League or Confederation of Nations that we are pledged to set up at the end of this war. But they will retain their full rights of sovereignty in the air with regard to all nationally or privately owned and/or controlled air lines.

The territories controlled by these Governments cover one-quarter of the earth's surface and are scattered over the seven seas and the five continents. No air-line of major importance could exist without passing through some of these territories. The proposed decision would therefore put into British hands a bargaining power that would be practically irresistible.

At the same time our position would be morally unassailable and would rally to our side the great body of opinion in the United Nations, including America, that thinks of civil aviation in terms of the future of civilisation rather than of rivalries between vested interests in air transport.

ROTH WILLIAMS

THE STRUGGLE IN YUGOSLAVIA

SIR,—The situation in Yugoslavia illustrates, in a way better than that in North Africa, the dangers that are lurking in a policy which lacks a frank partiality for the popular trends. For whatever reason, our pronouncements and our propaganda have pinned all the medals for resistance upon the breast of General Mihailovitch, and have ignored the part of the Croats and especially of the partisans. Yet in this case we cannot plead military necessity, for by all accounts the partisans are better organised and more active in their resistance to the Axis, while it seems equally true that for reasons of his own General Mihailovitch is engaged in fighting the partisans at least as much as

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Sagittarius
TARGETS

This is a sequel to *Sagittarius Rhyming*, published in 1940. It offers a running commentary on many of the principal public events and reactions of the past two years. If the author has refrained from aiming at certain obvious targets, this restraint has been exercised in the public interest and not on account of low visibility. Of *Sagittarius Rhyming* The Times Literary Supplement said: 'In Sagittarius' satirical mirror we can learn the lesson of the wasted years and of the evil powers which grew fat in them all the better for a leavening of exuberant humour.'

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JONATHAN CAPE

the Axis. In other words, he is bent upon destroying our most effective potential guerillas in what may prove a crucial region.

But the political side is, if anything, still more serious. It is fairly safe to assume that our policy in North Africa could not have pleased Soviet Russia. In the case of Yugoslavia we now find ourselves, by implication, actually in opposition to Russia, in a region in which Russian influence could not be ignored. I have reason to believe that certain Notes have passed between the Yugoslav Government and the Soviet Government which makes that plain. The Yugoslav Government appealed in a Note to the Soviet Government that they should use their influence with the Yugoslav partisans to make them submit to the orders of General Mihailovitch, and had the clumsiness to refer to the partisans as "international brigands." It was hardly a compliment to the Moscow Government to imply that it could control the activities of "international brigands." The Soviet reply did not take up that point, but it did snub the Yugoslav Government severely and suavely expressed surprise that it should wish to see "international brigands" brought under the orders of their Minister of War. It is easy to guess what the Soviet attitude will be if things develop in the Balkans, but it is difficult to see how it can be tied up with the line we ourselves have followed so far.

OXONIAN

RE-EDUCATION OF GERMANY

SIR,—In the excellent article on German Education in your issue of February 13th Dr. Julian Huxley, speaking of education in Germany after the war, says we must accept the principle that "it is impossible to indoctrinate democracy, or to impose education from without," such an indoctrination being, according to him, "a contradiction in terms."

I should like to suggest to Dr. Huxley that it will be impossible in a world in which we hope to see the ideals of freedom upheld and carried out, *not* to teach a belief in that freedom. We do not hesitate when dealing with individual behaviour to teach children quite categorically, and as ultimate values the need to be kind, honest and brave. Ought we not, as part of social ethics, to teach the value of freedom, of independence of judgment, and of the need for an untrammelled search for truth? Once we have put these ideals forward, the great decision in favour of democracy has been made, as these are activities which no dictatorship would permit.

If, indeed, we hold that indoctrination of any creed is bad, we are, *ipso facto*, teaching that no indoctrination—that is to say, freedom of thought—is good. In other words, we are "indoctrinating" a belief in freedom; and any inconsistency is thus resolved.

What about the other ideals on which democracy is based? Surely in any educational system we hope to see set up anywhere after the war, it should be advocated that justice is not merely the advantage of the stronger, that an agreed body of law should be the means by which disputes should be settled both between individuals and between nations; that changes in the existing state of affairs should be brought about by means of persuasion and argument rather than by violence; that citizens must feel personal responsibility for the good government of their State.

I do not suggest that these or similar ideals should be rammed down young people's throats; but I do propose that these ideals on which democracy rests should be held up as admirable. Is it not rather a case of "Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things"?

EVA M. HUBBACK,
Honorary Secretary.
Association for Education in Citizenship

"INDISPENSABLE"

SIR,—I was returned to industry, from the Forces, because, as I was informed by the Ministry of Labour, "my technical qualifications would prove of most value to the war effort in that sphere."

I am at present engaged on development work by a large firm. At present, no small part of my time is being spent as follows: I am given the patented product of some competing firm to examine, then, after a discussion with our patent section as to the scope and validity of the patent, my job is to devise a means of producing a product of equal merit to that of our competitor, without, of course, infringing their patent rights. The information obtained is then filed away, presumably until "the good old days" of peace-time, cut-throat competition return.

I can vouch that my case is no isolated one. Perhaps publicity in your columns may induce somebody with the necessary authority to do something about this.

EX-R.E.

SOMETHING WENT WRONG

SIR,—I refer to Mrs. Cole's review of *Something Went Wrong* by Lewis Browne in your last issue. She writes: "Maybe it does not greatly matter that another ignorant American journalist should have written another very bad book. It does matter, however, that publishers of repute should push this sort of stuff off on their public. Mr. Gollancz has made of *Something Went Wrong* a Left Book Club choice, and therefore may be presumed to have given it his special cachet. Could he not, if he wanted a book of this kind, have found someone who did know some history to write it? The attempt to make 'good propaganda' out of false history is a dangerous one—and a mistake that Marx never made." In view of the phrases "should push this sort of stuff on their public" and "could he not, if he wanted a book of this kind, have found someone who did know some history to write it?" you will perhaps permit me to say:

1. I did not commission anybody to write a book on the subject. This book was published in America by Messrs. Macmillan, not the least scholarly of American houses: my firm was offered the rights of publication in Great Britain in the ordinary manner.

2. In the ordinary manner, also, it was sent for report to a reader who has shown himself, over a long period, to be highly competent for judging works of this nature. He warmly recommended the book both for publication and as a Left Book Club choice.

3. It was then sent to an expert, not merely of British and European, but of world reputation. He also most warmly recommended it both for publication and as a Left Book Club choice.

Mrs. Cole may be right, and the two others wrong: or vice versa. But in view of what I have said, you will perhaps agree that her charge against me is without foundation.

VICTOR GOLLANCZ

JENNIE LEE AND THE I.L.P.

"Critic" states that Jennie Lee "could have walked into Parliament at Lanarkshire if she had accepted the Labour Party Whip," but that she stuck to the I.L.P. "out of personal loyalty to Maxton."

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE English visitor to the Continent was always surprised by the part played by students in society and in politics. They had even become the subjects of music and literature by a sort of natural right which, I rather think, has never existed in England since the time of Chaucer. The drinking songs and the tales of Heidelberg, a book like Murger's *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*, have no parallel in England; and the explanation seems to be that the English universities preserved the monasticism of the Middle Ages but cut themselves off from the medieval spirit. A student tradition, one that goes back to Abelard and Villon, is not nurtured in seclusion; it depends upon poverty and mingling with the ferment of the town. This has not been in the character of any of our older universities. For us the student does not exist. We have never idolised youth. Our idol, oddly enough, has been the Public School boy, and when a Frenchman asks us for the parallel to Murger's book, we are forced to hush up the fact that *Charley's Aunt* is the only play about an undergraduate, and to divert his attention to the enormous importance of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Among the Anglo-Saxons it was the unsecluded Americans, rather than ourselves, who took to the Quartier Latin as ducks to water in the last twenty years.

Like most English readers, when I was young I owed my first notions of the Quartier Latin to the sentimental and watered-down works of Thackeray, Du Maurier and W. J. Locke. These fanciful imitators of Murger were said to be harmless; while the sentiment, the tears and the picaresque farce of Murger were condemned as misleading. A Bohemia like his had never existed. Or, if it had, it certainly existed no more. Only lately I have read his *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*, and I regret, as usual, that I did not go to the fountain head before. Some of it is tedious, but the sketches have very amusing moments. Murger had that acute Parisian sense of comic pose, a kind of wit of situation as well as a wit of words and ideas, that crisply feathers the surface of life as he skims along. But the interesting thing about *La Vie de Bohème* is less the story than its success. Not entirely does Murger owe that to the accident of Puccini's opera. Murger had already made a very successful play of the book before Puccini took it up. A suggestive light is thrown by a remark of the Goncourts which they put down in their *Journal* in 1856:

"When Murger wrote *La Vie de Bohème*," they said, "he had no notion that he was writing the history of a social world which was to become a power within five or six years, yet that is the fact to-day." The Bohemians, they say, bar the way to the well born who are damned as amateurs. "The advent of Bohemia means the domination of socialism in literature."

If socialism does owe something to Bohemia, what Bohemia really did to artists and writers in the long run was, of course, to isolate them from society. Not socialism, but art for art's sake came out of that fruitful myth and produced in figures like Gaugin, Verlaine and Modigliani an isolation more haggard and stark than anything the frittering Murger and his little circle ever knew. Murger went to seed among the obliging tears of a small Parisian clique. The Goncourts maliciously note his first tail-coat, and his official break with the hungry past when he set up at the Café Riche. He became a journalistic slave, and in the words of his own Rudolphe honestly said, as we all have:

> Je veux bien consenter à regarder le passé, mais ce sera au travers d'une bouteille de vrai vin, et assis dans un bon fauteuil. Qu'est ce que tu veux, je suis un corrompu. Je n'aime plus que ce qui est bon.

He had, the Goncourts remarked, one of the largest funeral processions of his time, and among the mourners of the poet of hunger was Théophile Gautier, who talked, not very suitably, of the influence of cattle-cake on the flavour of steak, all the way to the cemetery.

Where the Goncourts' sharp nose for tendency was right was in detecting the enormous potential of publicity in the early idea of Bohemia. Murger, who was half-German, had given a halo to romantic disorder and, by the end of the century, Puccini and English best-sellers like Du Maurier and W. J. Locke, had carried the idea triumphantly into every vicarage and suburban villa. If you sat on the floor or boiled an egg unassisted you became a Bohemian. The romance of the 50's had become the myth of the century. The English Bohemians of Du Maurier and Locke are no longer poor students. They are the sons of rich parents. The famous Trilby is a model, but she comes from one of the best Irish families! Du Maurier's Laird—the only pleasant character in a dreadfully coy book—has his Broadwood and his furniture sent over from England to the Quartier Latin; and Locke's heroes always belong to the best county families and are tired of their clubs. The strange thing is that we are shown the lives of poor artists no more, but the lives of people whose ambition is to throw up everything and become poor in order to be artists or to live near them. Middle-class society is kicking over the traces. It is in conflict with itself. Yet the conflict is, so far, not very profound. The illusion of the new Bohemia was that it could preserve the middle-class amenities while throwing over the irking conventions that protected them. And by the Twenties we had arrived at a paradoxical situation which would have soured the faces of Murger's circle at the Café Riche: the bourgeois had been converted to art. All the world was bent upon becoming artistic. The Quartier Latin and Montparnasse had become the quarters of the rich. I remember my own early bewilderment in Paris. Brought up to believe that my intellectual emancipation depended on my finding a cheap room to live in on the left bank of the Seine, and that damnation awaited those who dwelt on the right, I gloomily remember I could not afford to be a Bohemian. Life was cheaper in Passy; one went to Montparnasse or the Rue de Seine to borrow money and to wonder what spirit of perversity and masochism had possessed the sons of rentiers that they must put on fancy dress and live among the worst drains of Europe. The Goncourts were right—Bohemia had become a racket, a greater racket than they could have guessed.

No doubt I exaggerate. My nose, insufficiently Bohemian, has many times led me out of the pensions of the Mont St. Geneviève and so has closed a world to me except as a spectator. I recognise my own facial expressions in Murger's picture of the bourgeois who used to go night after night to the café to watch with a craving he dreaded to reveal. There is, and will always be, the temporary Bohemianism like that of Murger's Rudolphe; and always, no doubt, what Murger called the Bohemianism of the impasse. That gaunt man with the Christ-like face and the invalid's straggling beard who sat all day over his cup of coffee and who looked as if he were starving, was a one-time silk salesman despite his "artistic" appearance. But he was in fact starving, God knows why, and they picked him up half dead in the street. The Bohemians of the impasse were, as Murger said, chronically unproductive and garrulous. If I wish to visualise a Bohemian of this kind I always think of a middle-aged man who, as an alleged fashion journalist, spent his days with the mannequins of the Rue de la Paix and played the harmonium on Sundays at a Methodist chapel. Murger knew his subject. It was his only subject. He knew and illustrated in his own life and work the drift into finicking which the life of the clique encourages. The frenzied hunt for the *pièce de cent sous*, the strangling estimate of whether the next meal lies north, south, east or west as you leave the door, are not the only enemies of the Bohemian; nor the hospital its final dread. The dreaded enemy is self-discovery. The inner terror which Murger described in another of his books is the fear not that the talent for which one suffers is insufficient, but that it simply is not there at all.

Socialists—the most respectable of men—have come to attack Bohemia for its disorder and its philosophy of isolation; but I wonder whether those who do so really attack it from a rival Bohemia of their own, the equally ancient Bohemia of the exile and refugee. Political Bohemia from the time of Herzen and through the life of Marx, offers a story no less wretched and picaresque than the lives of students and artists. If the Bohemia of the artist had been taken over wholesale by middle-class society in 1931, and had gone, its place was taken by this revived Bohemia of the refugee. Colourless and despondent, watchful and suspicious, whispering in groups over the backs of chairs at the Coupole or the Dôme, the exiles sat waiting for news from home, where the gaudy and gregarious figures of the earlier decade hoped they'd heard the last of it. And perhaps that is a portent. Mr. E. M. Forster has lately recommended a return to Bohemia for writers; but to-morrow independent political thought, not art, may be one of the seven deadly and unremunerative sins. Du Maurier's Little Billee turned "deathly pale" when he saw Trilby, a lady of one of the best Irish families, posing for "the altogether"; his grandson may crumple up if he catches her indecently exposing the charms of a minority mind to oblige a few friends.

I have said very little about Murger's sketches themselves. They have a boulevard wit and when, later on in life, Murger decided to give up the fastidiousness of art and to go after money in the theatre, he made the right decision. He was not a natural highbrow. His melancholy temperament was that of the clown, not of the poet; he was a born writer of farce and his young men have that too eternal youth of the theatre. His student wit is exact. And his sense of blague never fails him. The youth who paints a luxurious room on screens in lieu of furniture, the expert borrower who has noted down where he can get a free meal for every day of the month and, going out for it discovers his host has left and is on his way to see the borrower on the same mission—these are the brainwaves of the theatre. The light sentiment, the conventional Parisian irony, punctuated by an occasional real phrase taken from life, are agreeable enough in short snatches. And the Mimi of the book, whose life with Rudolphe is frankly, if rather cosily, described as a hell of jealousy and injudicious expense—hats and boots were Mimi's weakness—is a good deal livelier than the Mimi of the play or the opera. The ornately facetious style is not the journalese of the comic writers, though I don't know that that makes it any better. Really, there is no serious reproach which can be fairly made against Murger. He is simply a little writer, a brilliant dabbler in unreality, high spirits and sadness, whose very melancholy, as it ripples along, reveals a fundamental lack of seriousness. His letters, with their outcry against hunger and their hard tale of work, describe with bitter dignity a *Vie de Bohème* which he glossed over with a phrase or two in the sketches. His own horrible death—his flesh was decaying; shortly before he died his lip fell off when he was shaving—and the death of the real Mimi, were the end of a story very different from his light elegy of lost youth.

V. S. PRITCHETT

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LITTLE GIDDING

Little Gidding. By T. S. ELIOT. *Faber.* 1s.

The theme which Mr. Eliot treats in this poem—as in the three poems preceding it—is very difficult to state except in the form in which he has stated it; the vocabulary we are accustomed to use about time lacks the fitting terms; they have either fallen out of use or not yet come into currency. These poems contain probably the most essential and intimate poetry that Mr. Eliot has written, yet to those who accept the modern conception of time, the conception of development or evolution, it may easily appear remote and tenuous. For it goes beyond the idea of development and concentrates its main attention neither on the past nor on the future, finding no ultimate meaning in the one or ultimate hope in the other. It is concerned with

> a moment in and out of time . . .
>
> . . . transecting, bisecting the world of time, a moment in time, but not like a moment of time,
> A moment in time, but time was made through that moment, for without the meaning there is no time, and that moment of time gave the meaning.

When Mr. Eliot has to state the theme of his later poetry with such scholastic precision, there is little hope of paraphrasing it. But roughly, and inaccurately, it may be described as that state of human experience which is existence, not change, a state without which our life would be meaningless to us, yet which is embodied in the texture of change, so that it appears as a contradiction only to be described by posing a sequence of contradictions. To ring changes on these, to speak of

> the still point of the turning world,

or of the communication of the dead as

> tongued with fire beyond the language of the living,

or of the intersection of the timeless moment as

> England and nowhere. Never and always

may appear to some people merely a remote and abstruse game. But it is not only remote and abstruse; it is also intimate. Whether Mr. Eliot has been influenced in the form he has chosen for those poems by Beethoven's last quartets, as has often been said, I do not know; but they certainly resemble the quartets in this combination of remoteness and intimacy, a strange but harmonious combination. They are remote because they pass beyond time as we ordinarily conceive it, and intimate because they go to the hidden heart of human experience and touch

> the still point where the dance is.

Their curious quality may be described in another way by saying that they are both very intimate and impersonal. The man who has experienced, questioned, inquired does not appear at all except as a deliberately dramatised figure seen like any other figure, a part of the machinery of the poem, as in the second section of "Little Gidding." This impersonality by its insistence occasionally produces difficulties, as in the fine introduction to the present poem:

> When the short day is brightest, with frost and fire,
> The brief sun flames the ice, on pond and ditches,
> In windless cold that is the heart's heat,
> Reflecting in a watery mirror
> A glare that is blindness in the early afternoon.
> And glow more intense than blaze of branch, or brazier,
> Stirs the dumb spirit: no wind, but pentecostal fire
> In the dark time of the year,

Something more was needed, one feels, to make us accept the descent of the pentecostal fire on the generalised spectator, in spite of the beauty of the intense winter mood evoked to prepare for it. But this is an incidental criticism, for the impersonality itself is an essential part of the dignity and beauty of the poem.

Those who accept Mr. Eliot's conception of time and of life will be more profoundly moved by this poem than those who do not, though such assent is not required for an understanding and enjoyment of it. "Little Gidding" is in five movements. The first is introductory and sets the theme. The second is a sort of leavetaking, with a remote echo of "The Waste Land"; the versification in this section is superb. In the next movement Mr. Eliot reaches the resolution of the poem (and of all four poems). Beginning with a passage on the use of memory, which is

> For liberation—not less of love but expanding
> Of love beyond desire and so liberation
> From the future as well as the past,

he goes on to assert that

> All shall be well, and
> All manner of thing shall be well,

an affirmation caught up in the song in the next section, which has much the same resemblance to a simple lyric as the *alla danza tedesca* movement in the B flat major quartet has to a simple dance. The fifth movement, like the third, is reflective, playing for the last time with the paradox of the timeless moment:

> Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning,
> Every poem an epitaph . . .
>
> The moment of the rose and the moment of the yew-tree
> Are of equal duration . . .
>
> And the end of all our exploring
> Will be to arrive where we started
> And know the place for the first time.

The mood of still intensity which runs through the poem deepens towards the end:

> All manner of thing shall be well
> When the tongues of flame are in-folded
> Into the crowned knot of fire
> And the fire and the rose are one.

This poem, like its three predecessors, is filled with statements which are both statements of a paradox and statements of the things in which Mr. Eliot believes. Readers who go to the poems for their poetry cannot be expected to accept all that Mr. Eliot believes; but it will be hard for them to question the accuracy and force with which the paradox is stated, in a sustained concentration of thought, feeling and imagination, or to doubt that these four poems are the most original contribution to poetry that has been made in our time.

EDWIN MUIR

SOCIOLOGY FOR MAYFAIR

The Future of Industrial Man. By PETER F. DRUCKER. *Heinemann.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Drucker has already made a considerable reputation for himself as an economic journalist; and the achievement of a refugee who writes so vigorous an English style is indeed a remarkable one. Yet it is legitimate, I think, to be a little suspicious of the basis upon which that reputation is built. Mr. Drucker is one of a considerable number of writers in Britain and America who appear to have set themselves the function of helping the public to evade the issue by which it is faced. They write with ease, with vigour, and with a fluency of generalisation, which it is difficult not to envy; but the real result of their work is to lull the public into a faith that, with just a little more reasonableness, just a little more wisdom, just a little more common sense, everything can be arranged quite nicely, and no harm need be done to anyone. The school seems to work to a formula which is applied with that air of sophistication so impressive to the general reader, and so irritating to the student who is anxious to see the proof of its validity set out. The formula gives the right to an ultimate optimism, and there is something in it for everybody. In King Street it sounds, no doubt, like the note of alliance with the enemy; but since it makes the genuine die-hard grow hot and angry, men of good will suspect that the very moderation of Mr. Drucker and his like is the proof of their virtue. In the result, he obtains an influence that is quite out of proportion to any serious analysis he has to make of the problems by which we are confronted.

The formula is not very complicated. If we could prevent the frustration of science and technology, we might enter upon an age of abundance. Marx and his descendants assumed that this frustration was inevitable under capitalism. But they thought in terms of economics of scarcity which is now no longer valid. Their view of the state and the class-struggle is, of course, related to the old fashioned economics of that time. So the fearful may be assured that Marxism is a Victorian horror which need not haunt their dreams. The "economic man" is a vestigial residuum which all modern knowledge entitles us to reject. So relieved from the first nightmare, the anxious general reader is next released from the second. This, broadly speaking, is totalitarianism in all its forms; and Mr. Drucker brings his soothing syrup to the help of the patient who may feel that he has escaped from Marx only to fall into the hands of Hitler.

This is the subject of Mr. Drucker's new book. First, he shows that Hitlerism contains the seeds of its own destruction. But there are, of course, many who fear that the conquerors may build an *étatiste* society in which the free individual will have lost all spontaneity and initiative. He has got out of the frying-pan. Is there no alternative but the fire? Mr. Drucker can reassure him. The United States has the secret of freedom; it lies in a functional decentralisation which preserves the individual by "building a genuine local self-government in the industrial sphere." By making the plant "a functioning self-governing social community," it can do for the industrial age what the village did for the rural. It is the safeguard against bureaucracy. It enables us to balance freedom against control so that we are not lost in the maze of Washington or Whitehall. We cannot go back to *laissez-faire*; total planning is abhorrent to free men. But if, while we are winning the war, we give Mr. Drucker's formula its chance, we shall solve the endless problem of combining stability and freedom.

I agree, if I may say so, with Mr. Drucker that a considerable degree of decentralisation is vital to a free society, and I agree, also, that the extension of the frontiers of democracy into the economic field is one of the conditions for the fulfilment of personality. But even when these two conclusions are dressed up in all the panoply of dubious historical generalisation by which Mr. Drucker seeks to make them seem the end—result of the historical process I must confess I do not find them very enlightening. The problems he evades are terrifying in their magnitude. The nature of the state; the possibility that the main controversial questions will be tackled by men who share the same premises; the meaning of the deep hostility to the New Deal which still, I suspect, lingers in Wall Street and State Street; the implications of phenomena like Father Coughlin and Gerald Smith and Tom Girdler; the significance of the facts revealed in the reports of the Truman Committee and the La Follette Committee; we should gladly have heard Mr. Drucker's reading of these in place of his somewhat juvenile observations on Rousseau as the precursor of Hitler or the facile paradoxes about the meaning of 1776. The truth is, I fear, that Mr. Drucker is too concerned to offer us comfortable doctrine to make it possible for him to meet the issues he ought to meet in all their formidable complexity. He writes of Burke with enthusiasm; but I fear that Burke is far too many-sided to fit the formula he has invented for him. No doubt this kind of simplification gives comfort on Park Avenue and Beacon Hill; but it is an evasion and not a remedy.

Mr. Drucker is, obviously, an able man, who has read widely and is keen to put our crisis in a frame which makes it intelligible. But in his anxiety to bring good news to the anxious and the timid, he has refused to tell them starkly how near their feet lie to the abyss. He is in real danger of becoming a kind of political Buchmanite, who will satisfy those who are content with clever superficialities and can then rest at ease in Zion. But for the serious student he does not dig deep enough and he leaves one with the uneasy feeling that he is not aware how deep he ought to dig. With all his gifts, therefore, his work is a hindrance to serious thinking, for it fails to set the nature of the problem in a perspective proportionate to its massive complexity.

HAROLD J. LASKI

"JUVENILE DELINQUENCY"

The Child and the Magistrate. By JOHN WATSON. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

"*Les enfants sont ce qu'on les fait.*" This is the motto on the title-page of this modest-looking little book. It is written by the Chairman of the Southwark Juvenile Court, who is also, on the other five days of the working week, a surveyor looking after house-property in a poor district. So the shattering indictment of our society which the motto implies is not based on ignorance of the facts. Juvenile delinquency, on its present scale, is a manufactured article. Its raw material is human nature, but the finished product is as much of a luxury as any of those embellishments of our civilisation which we are now discovering we can very well do without.

If you are interested in malaria, you can learn a lot about this particular disease both from the mosquito which produces it and from the patient who has got it. For five days a week Mr. Watson observes the mosquito end of this other disease; on the sixth he devotes himself to diagnosis and treatment. The main breeding-ground of juvenile delinquency's mosquito, he considers, is bad housing. It needs a superhuman parent to bring up children properly in many of the South London "homes," and superhuman parents do not often live in slums. Even so, proper treatment of the patient can still defeat the disease, or again, doctor and nurse, i.e., the magistrate and the authorities to whom he sends the case, can easily, and quite often do, finish the job which the mosquito has begun.

Prevention may be a matter of large-scale reorganisation; without it you can scarcely hope to tackle (it is Mr. Watson's own list) "poverty and slums, disease and drink, immorality, indifference to religion and that most tragic of all a child's afflictions—a broken home." But cure, at any rate, is now, since the Children and Young Persons Act of 1933, an affair of careful attention to detail and imaginative handling of each individual case.

It is his point of view which makes Mr. Watson's reader feel about him as George III felt about the elder Pitt: if he is mad, it is a pity he cannot bite his fellow-magistrates wholesale. "*Les enfants sont ce qu'on les fait.*" So the first thing to do to make anything of a "boy in trouble" (to steal the phrase of Mrs. Lemesurier, another labourer in the same vineyard) is to get him to see that someone believes in him, by behaving towards him "not like a magistrate, but like a gentleman." (This is what a grateful mother once wrote to Mr. Watson to describe his handling of her son's case.) Superior persons do not always realise that good manners are highly infectious. "The poor," old and young—especially perhaps young—understand, appreciate and respond to them as quickly as anyone, in fact, just as readily as they re-act—with sometimes disconcerting readiness—to bad manners. The essence of good manners is to "condescend" without condescension; to join people on their own level, not to patronise them from your own. But how many magistrates could, first, elicit in a heart-to-heart talk with a small thief of pennies from his aunt's purse the fact that he also kept a tame tortoise and, secondly, remember, when child and magistrate met again after three months probation of the former, to inquire after the tortoise's health? Here is not only a vindication of Mr. Watson's elaborate card catalogue of cases kept in the fullest detail by his personal secretary and brought to Court each week in the police-van, but also a short cut to the establishment of mutual confidence between delinquent and judicial authority. "It is worth a big effort," too, "to make the child feel that the decision is fair" and an effort of "condescension" indeed. No wonder Mr. Watson thinks that many Juvenile Court magistrates are too old and others too pompous, even if under sixty. When he visits an approved school, which he frequently does, he always gets leave to be taken round the buildings by a party of boys, but many of his fellow-magistrates have never even carried out a normal inspection of any such institution. So pomposity and senility are often buttressed by sheer ignorance.

Yet the decision should *be*, as well as seem, fair. "Punishment," to misquote Hobbes, "is an evil inflicted by public authority to the end that the boy or girl punished may thereby be the better disposed to obedience." If grown-ups are often "past praying for" (itself a debatable point), children certainly are not. But they soon can be made so by the kind of punishment which disposes to disobedience. Read Mr. Watson on prison for adolescents, birching for small boys, the infliction of fines which parents are allowed to pay, and contrast his accounts of boys and girls rescued from impossible conditions and put on their feet sooner or later by a bold experiment or a whole series of alternatives. The alternatives, of probation at home, of billeting with foster-parents, of a spell at a Club hostel, of "approved schools," of Borstal treatment, of psychological investigation and clinical training are all there: what is needed to use them properly, that is, curatively, is something like the proverbial "eye of an eagle and instincts of a mole": patience, energy, sympathy and insight: a love of children at once paternal and catholic.

Mr. Watson has all these endowments. He has driven a destitute young vagrant of 15 to a billet in the country in his own car and elicited from him the remark that a cow, when he saw one for the first time on his way, was "very like its pictures." Within a week he gets a four-page autobiography from the age of 7 written by the lad, and reproduced in full, spelling and punctuation unaltered, as a prologue to his book. He knows the family history of Edward Scott, aged 9, the illegitimate son of a married prostitute, who was only 17 when he was born; he knows about Mr. and Mrs. Garrett and their baby whose bed, on which he usually lay naked except for a vest, was a verminous mattress covered with a heap of old coats; about Doreen and Margery, both of whom had a child by their widower father and applied to the police for protection for their younger sisters; about David, an experienced thief, only detected, at the age of ten, by an unusually clumsy theft of a bicycle, whose unpleasant personal habits and nervous twitch were only got under control, after a series of abortive experiments, by a course of treatment, partially financed from the Court poor-box, at a child-guidance clinic, and who is now doing well in the Navy. He knows how to make a boy at once ashamed of himself and ready for a fresh start by a carefully staged telling-off in Court; how to prevent silly parents from encouraging their son to self-pity at an approved school; how to show trust in a lad's word and encourage him not to break it; he knows how often "the spirit of mischief in children is merely a younger and more wayward brother of that spirit of adventure which we all admire." He knows the depth and strength of family feeling in South London; the devotion to "Mum" which answers her selfless toil for her unending brood; how "Dad's" rather feckless good nature, lapsing gradually into apathy, tempered by irritability, can weaken his authority without affecting his prestige; how the neighbours' invariable assumption, when anything is broken, lost or damaged, "it's them boys again," can create the very symptoms it condemns among the defiant young pariahs of the street corner; how silly the same girl can be with her boy and how angelic with her young brothers and sisters. It is this knowledge which makes his Court a place where punishment disposes to

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obedience, so that one wonders whether the young people who appear before him are not often more fortunate than their confederates who escape detection. Is it not an odd, or even a sinister, thing that a boy's best chance of a real start in life should sometimes be that he should qualify as a delinquent? And yet if crime be in fact a disease, there is something to be said for catching it, if the result is expert hospital treatment, and a well-planned convalescence. Still, even from a hospital you cannot rely on getting that—too much depends on who the doctor is. Southwark is not fortunate in her housing, but she has the right Chairman in her Juvenile Court.

KENNETH BELL

BIRTH OF A CITY

Behind the Urals. By JOHN SCOTT. *Secker and Warburg.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Let us imagine that in 1927 the *Obshestvo Individualistov*, a mythical Soviet Society of Individualists, had brought about an amendment to the Constitution, allowing them, with the aid of Government loans, to develop Soviet industry as capitalists. And let us suppose that they took the almost virgin Ural region which Scott describes, as the field for their enterprise. Would the Soviet Union to-day be able to supply its armies with endless trains of munitions from the East? Would the shuttle service that brings coal from the Kusbas to Magnitnaya ore, over a thousand miles away, now be operating? Would the satellite arms towns of the Urals, so exactly situated for strategy, have existed? Would the present stores of oil and equipment have accumulated in the depots and warehouses of entrepreneurs?

Almost certainly not. The planning of the Soviet Eastern industry was functional, not commercial. When American engineers threw up their hands at plants which were operating at an accountancy loss, they had little idea of the great dividends they would yield in 1943. In free competition, Magnitogorsk would have been a city of slums supplied by cheap Kirghiz and Kazakh labour. Heavy transport charges would have made uneconomical the haul to and from the Kusbas and so frustrated the growth of the great steel combines in the Urals and Western Siberia. Only a Socialist Master Plan, capable of bearing a loss in one sector through the efforts of another and willing to discount a generation's happiness for its millennial intention, could have created the Soviet industrial zone of the East.

Mr. John Scott, an American, has given a vivid personal record of five years as a worker at Magnitogorsk, in which the Plan is the background for each individual. To have been present at the birth on the barren Magnetic Mountain of the great city where the intermingled races of the Soviet Union have forged the Red Army's steel is a rare experience; to communicate it as excitingly as Mr. Scott, while at the same time disclosing its sober purpose is an unusual contribution to the literature of Anglo-Soviet understanding. Magnitostroi, 1930—shanty town; Magnitogorsk, 1934—barracks town; Magnitogorsk, 1940—steel city. Inexperienced workers, only lately peasants, fall to death from steel girders; ignorant workers ruin valuable machinery. Engineers order unsuitable plant; saboteurs and enthusiasts cause breakdowns in production. Mr. Scott's statistics have flesh and blood.

To some extent, however, he overstresses the revival of nationalism. Soviet nationalism isn't the same as Russian nationalism. It isn't the Russian national spirit which enables Russians and Tartars to work happily side by side. It isn't the Russian national spirit which enables Russians to organise, an accomplishment which they noticeably lacked in 1914. Both are achievements of Soviet Socialism. If there is anything specifically national in Russia's achievements in the Urals, it lies in the great scope of the Plan and the exuberance with which it has been fulfilled. Like Nature herself, the Soviet Union often seems prodigal of energy while it creates. But what seems waste is really insurance.

Behind the Urals, the impression of an American worker, is promise of what one day will come from the East when a Russian worker can pause to write his own story.

MAURICE EDELMAN

The Green Grass Grew All Round. By JOHN PUDNEY. *Lane.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Service in the R.A.F. seems to stimulate literary talent. A considerable number of the most striking books with war themes published recently have been written by airmen. John Pudney made an important contribution to them in *Dispersal Point*, a collection of war poems which have been so enthusiastically praised that interest in the book he has written since in his off-duty hours is assured. Its title suggests that it has nothing in common with *Dispersal Point*, yet its readers may be surprised to find that the war is not even mentioned in its pages. "I have taken a holiday generally from things as they are," Mr. Pudney explains in his foreword, pleading guilty to the charge of escapism all the more readily, perhaps, because he wears uniform, an extenuation in itself. The holid has been spent in recalling a past before the war, wh discovering that he was fundamentally country minded (often the result of week-ending in a villa he left London for good and made his home in farmhouse in East Anglia. It is difficult to pla *The Green Grass Grew All Round*. It is partly aut biography, partly fiction. Mr. Pudney has dexterous woven into a true story of incidents in his country li an imaginary story of characters of his own inventio "So much that is guileless and agreeable, forthrig and wise dwelt in these things as they were that has been refreshing to write them down." And wh could be more refreshing to the war-weary than read of such things, set down with the charm, sensitiv ness and drollery which pervade Mr. Pudney excellent prose?

Some Modern Substitutes for Christianity By BEDE FROST. *Mowbray.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

This is an unpretentious useful booklet, the te of six lectures delivered at the request of the Bisho of Chichester, in the Brighton Pavilion. They cov some of the main current superstitions and rece lines of belief, including Spiritualism, Theosophy Astrology, Christian Science and British Israel. The is nothing very new or scholarly here, but a hand compendium of the official statements and adver critiques of these creeds. There are amusing com parisons and contradictions disclosed through th author's selective skill, especially with the Britis Israelites, final outpost of pyramidal stupidity. Th author is less than fair, as a rather doctrinaire Anglic discussing unpleasantly successful rivals. He fails appreciate, for instance, the genuinely social an serviceable aspects of contemporary Christian Scienc He does not sufficiently discuss the way new sec have prospered because orthodox Christianity ha failed to meet spiritual needs in this century. Eve so, this clearly written, easily read (and, incidentall easily overlooked) little book is a helpful contributio in a field the importance of which is still ignored b serious people of all sorts.

Les Fleurs du Mal. Par CHARLES BAUDELAIR *Barnard and Westwood.* 4*s.* 6*d.*

The publishers are to be congratulated on thi enterprise in producing a series of French book under the editorship of M. André Labarthe. Frenc books are becoming as rare as French wines, and thi invaluable series, which began with a Rimbaud, an a Péguy anthology, now provides a *Fleurs du Mal* an promises a Mallarmé.

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Week-end Competitions

No. 681

Set by Roger Marvell

A rumour from the Elysian Fields suggests that Gibbon is engaged upon a history of the Rise and Fall of the Nazi Empire. Competitors are invited to submit footnotes from this work, on the assumption that the historian still employs footnotes for comments ill-suited to the dignity of the text.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, March 1st.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 678

Set by Fred Oyster.

A book is being compiled of stories illustrating the intelligence of animals. Competitors are asked to submit these, and to send only true stories. Limit, 150 words.

Report by Fred Oyster.

The results of this competition are rather hard to assess because it involves the good faith of competitors. Obviously the best stories are those that sound tall but are true; and the difficulty is to decide whether the teller has improved on fact or not. That many anecdotes illustrating the sagacity of animals are only half- or quarter- true I have little doubt; coincidence has a long arm, so has sentiment, and almost everyone likes to fantasticate about animals as about ghosts. How is one to judge? The story about a cat living in Finchley who used to knock every day on the front door may be authentic; and perhaps there is a dog in Worthing who leaves the room when Hitler speaks, but does he stay for Churchill?

I have a story of my own, true as far as it goes. An old black retriever came into a pub in Drury Lane where I was having a drink, and the landlord stood this dog a half-pint of stout, which was poured into a bowl and placed on the floor. The animal drank up and went out. So much is fact. The landlord then told me that the dog used at one time to come in for a drink with his master and continued the habit after his master's death, and that (also from habit and devotion) the dog continued to call at Vine Street Police Station in the morning. That part of the story I haven't checked. But, of course, when people begin talking about animal eccentrics, I bring out the whole story as though it were gospel.

One of the best stories was sent by Michael Joseph: "W. H. Hudson was a keen observer of cats' intelligence. He tells the story of a cat who, like so many of his kind, was fastidious about food. This cat invariably had his meal from a particular plate set down in the corner by the kitchen range. One day he came in, sat down before the plate, but declined to eat. The housekeeper, guessing what was in his mind, told him sharply he would get nothing more until he had eaten what was on his plate. The cat disappeared, to return a few minutes later, followed by the next-door cat, an underfed animal glad of any food he could get. The visitor quickly licked the plate clean and his host was then rewarded with the more delicate fare his nose had detected. On no other occasion did he ever permit this neighbour to enter the house." But since this comes from Hudson I don't think it qualifies for a prize. The winners, dividing the prizes equally, are Mrs. Eric Byron, "Lowndes Square," Guy Innes, Toni Nicholson, F. C. C., and Grace Blythe.

A Pekinese, the cherished pet and friend of Lady C——, passed, on her ladyship's death, into the possession of her companion, Miss T——, a well-meaning person, but of mean birth and limited income. The little dog, whose favourite seat was a copy of Debrett rebound by Lady C—— in soft leather, disappeared after some days and was later discovered to have made its way to the town house of Lady M——, whose social standing was equal to and possibly higher than that of its former mistress. I might add that the clever little creature had before this time been *a complete* stranger to Lady M——, and her house, but finding it satisfactory chose to make its home there for the remaining years of its life. ("Lowndes Square")

Potiphar, a "leal true cat" who, when his mistress whistled, used to jump on her lap and pat her mouth gently to make her stop, was the honoured companion of a lady and gentleman who lived in the Temple. A visitor who was no judge of catflesh remarked of him, "You ought to get rid of that cat: it's far too old to catch mice." Potiphar rose and stalked from the room. When the door was opened later to allow the visitor to depart, Potiphar marched in, carrying a large rat which he had slain, and laid it deliberately at his detractor's feet. (Guy Innes)

A carpenter of my acquaintance was much puzzled by the way in which his boiled oil disappeared. This he kept in a bottle on his bench under a window-sill. One night he decided to watch and was rewarded by seeing a rat seat itself on the window-sill and drop its tail into the bottle of oil. It then withdrew the tail, licked it clean and inserted it in the bottle again, and did this repeatedly until the level of the oil was appreciably lowered in the bottle. (Grace A. Blyth)

Some horses and cows were grazing in a meadow by the side of the River Thames. A horse going too near the edge, fell into the water. He swam up and down, up and down stream until nearly exhausted. Great agitation was shown amongst the other animals, who watched him from the bank.

At length some men from a dredger brought a rope and rescued the poor beast. And then two of the horses took him in hand. Keeping him tightly in between them pressed close to their warm bodies, one with his head towards the victim's tail and the other towards his head, and apparently against his will, they moved with him all over the field, persevering in their ministrations until it seemed to them he was dry or at least out of danger, and then they let him go. (Mrs. Eric Byron)

(Who watched from the other side of the river.)

Some years ago some experiments were tried with a nest of ants that were kept on an "island" in one of our large zoos. A caterpillar was placed on the island, and was at once set on by the ants. The caterpillar sought refuge in flight, and climbed up a stout piece of nearby grass.

But instead of climbing up head first (when he would have at once been set on by the ants), he went up tail first, and like a famous predecessor was thus able to defend the "bridge" against all comers. After the ants had lost several of their number in trying to get at him, they withdrew as if in conference and presently some of their number advanced to the attack and commenced to bite through the blade of grass.

The caterpillar fell among them and was at once set upon and demolished. (Toni Nicholson)

When I was a child we knew a lady living in Cambridge with a small, black, bandy-legged Aberdeen terrier, who had the bearing and dignity of a bishop. Every day she went to the University Library accompanied by Scrubbins, who then waited outside whilst she researched within. But occasionally on emerging at the end of morning, possibly in a state of abstraction, she failed to make contact with him, and returned home by herself. When it was borne in upon Scrubbins that this had happened, he walked with his usual dignity to the cab-rank on King's Parade, and climbed into a hansom. In those calmer days, both his mistress and himself were well known Cambridge figures, and Scrubbins was at once driven to his home on the Huntingdon Road. I should like to add that he then fetched the half-crown in his mouth and gave it to the cabman, but this would not be authentic.

(F. C. C.)

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ALEX. REID & Lefevre, Ltd., 12 King St., S.W.1. Paintings by L. S. Lowry and Josef Herman. Daily 10–5.30. Sats., 10–1.

SEX Education Lectures. "Love without Fear." Dr. Eustace Chesser, Feb. 20th. "Abortion—the Social Evil," Dr. Aleck Bourne, F.R.C.S., March 20th. 3 p.m. Conway Hall, Holborn. Adm. 1s. Progressive League, 49 Nassington Rd., N.W.3.

BEVERIDGE Report. One-day School at Walthamstow Settlement, Greenleaf Road, Walthamstow, Sat., Feb. 27th. Speakers: Mrs. Joan S. Clarke, 3.30; Barbara Betts, 6 p.m. Chairman, W. Burmeister. Admission to each session, 6d. Tea 1s.

"INDEPENDENCE for India?" conference to be addressed by V. Krishna Menon, Secretary, India League, in the R.A.C.S. Hall, Co-operative House, Rye Lane, Peckham, on Saturday, February 27th, 3 p.m.

SPEECH Fellowship, 9 Fitzroy Square, W.1. Discussion meeting "Speech and Social Welfare," February 27th, 2.30. Admission free. Collection. All interested in speech are invited.

RACIAL Relations Group (Institute of Sociology), Friday, Feb. 26th, 5 p.m., Royal Hotel, Woburn Place. Mr. K. L. Little on "Some Problems of Anglo-Colonial Relations."

WOMEN'S International League Meeting, February 24th, 1 p.m., Friends' House, Euston Road, N.W.1. Subject: Germany in the Reconstruction of Europe. Speaker, Dr. Liba Ambrosova. Chairman, Miss Freda White. Admission, including lunch, 2s. 3d. Those wishing to attend should notify MISS HARRISON, 2 Cranbourne Ct., Albert Bridge Rd., S.W.11, two days before meeting. TERminus 4025.

CAMBRIDGE Theatre. Sundays, Feb. 21st, 28th and Mar. 7th, at 6 p.m. Feb 21st: "How the Fifth Column Works," George Leeson. Film "The New Teacher." Tickets, 2s., from L.D.C.P., 38 Clerkenwell Green, E.C.1.

RECONSTRUCTION. Six public lectures by E F. M. Durbin on Mondays at 6.30, beginning Feb. 22nd, at Morley College. [Need we be poor after the war? Can we cure unemployment? Do we want a planned economy? Can we aid Europe after the war? What are we to do about Germany? A Society for the Free.] Course ticket 5s. Details of this and other courses from SECRETARY, 61 Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.1.

INDIA. Public meeting, Friday, at 7 p.m., to demand "Unconditional Release of Mahatma Gandhi and other political prisoners" at Conway Hall, near Kingsway. Speakers: Rashid Anwar, A. Z. Khan, Suresh Vaidza, S. P. Mitra, Surat Alley, Hami Bode, organised by Swaraj House, 32 Percy Street, W.1. Mus. 7277.

INDIA and the World Scene. Fifth in a series of lunch-hour lectures at the Trade Union Club, 12 Great Newport St., W.C.2, on Wednesday, February 24th, at 1.15. J. F. HORRABIN. Chairman, Fenner Brockway. Admission free. Indian Freedom Campaign.

JAMES MAXTON, M.P., Walter Padley, Conway Hall, Sunday, Feb. 28th, 3 p.m., "For a Socialist Britain Now!"

COMMON Wealth. Purley Branch, Feb. 23rd, 8 p.m., at Whitecote's Cafe (next to Astoria Cinema). TOM SARGANT, "Profit Motive and Service Motive."

SATURDAY teatime meeting, Feb. 20th, 5 p.m., International Forum, City Literary Institute (off Drury Lane): DR. LEUTKENS on "The Future of Germany." Canteen.

A.I.A. Lecture at National Gallery. James Laver, "The Artist and the War of 1870." Sun., Feb. 21st, at 3 p.m. Entrance 1s.

SOUTH Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Sunday Meetings, 11 a.m. Feb. 21st: DR. C. JOAD, M.A., D.Lit., "Eighty-seven years of Bernard Shaw, the Socialist and Playwright."

ETHICAL Church, Queensway, W.2. Feb. 21st, 11.30. J. C. G. BURTON: "In what sense is life worth living?"

"THE Goal of a New World Order"—a series of talks Baha'i Centre, 46 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1. Sundays, 3.30 p.m. Feb. 21st: "The World Society."

DISCUSSION Course. "Beveridge Plan for Social Security," Livingstone Hall, Tothill St., S.W.1. Opener, Miss Joyce Burnham, B.A. Weds., Feb. 24th—Mar. 17th, 6 p.m.: (1) The aim of a plan for Social Security—Unification and the Insurance Principle. (2) The Three Assumptions and the economic question. (3) Scope, classification and some special problems. (4) The future of voluntary organisations, and the fear of bureaucracy. When and how is reconstruction to come? Tickets, 1s. 6d. each lecture, 5s. for course. Apply SEC., British Federation of Social Workers, 5 Victoria St., S.W.1. (Abbey 2860.)

PROFESSOR Gilbert Murray (Joint-President of League of Nations Union) speaks on "Real Peace This Time," Central Hall, Westminster, Friday, Feb. 26th. 7 p.m. Questions invited. Admission free.

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MERCURY, W.11. Park 5700. Evgs. 6 (ex. Mon.), Tu., Ths., 3.0. From Feb. 23rd: "Day Without End" (Eugene O'Neill).

UNITY Theatre presents "Buster," by Ted Willis. Thurs., Fri., Sat., Sun., 7.0. Book now. EUS. 5391, 1 Goldington Street, N.W.1. Members and affiliates only. Membership 2s.

PETER PEARS (Tenor) and Benjamin Britten (Piano). Concert, Sunday, February 28th, 2.45 p.m., at Friends' House, Euston Road, N.W.1, in aid of Friends War Relief Service. Tickets 2s., from Friends' House (Euston 2747), usual agencies, and at door. (Registered War Charity.)

YOUTH House Club invites you to an "At Home" on Monday evenings. Vegetarian dinner 6.15 to 7.0; talk and discussion (various subjects) 7.30 to 9.0, followed by refreshments; dancing until 10.30. Visitors welcome. Particulars of membership from ORG. SEC., Youth House, 250 Camden Rd., N.W.1. (GUL. 5189.)

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SATURDAY, Feb. 20th, 6.30, Royal Hotel, W.C.1. Red Army Birthday Dance. Allan Kane. Caucasian Cabaret. Admission 3s.

Appointments Vacant and Wanted

None of the vacancies for women advertised in this journal relates to a woman between 18 and 31 unless such a woman (a) has living with her a child of hers under the age of 14, or (b) is registered under the Blind Persons Acts, or (c) has a Ministry of Labour permit to allow her to obtain employment by individual efforts.

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The Week-end Review

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COMMONSENSE OR PRESTIGE?

TOGETHER with a great part of mankind in China and the United States as well as in India we have had to read the daily reports of Mr. Gandhi's condition with a deepening sense of impending tragedy. It is our conviction that his death as the result of this fast would dig a gulf between us and the Indian people which might for a generation defy all our efforts to bridge it. What alarms us is not so much the outbreak of anger and the acts of repression that would follow this leader's death: far worse would be the cold, irreconcilable sense of alienation that would for long years divide us. At the best of times neither people finds it easy to understand the other. But if we let Mr. Gandhi die, in the eyes of Indians a martyr, the deduction throughout the Asiatic world would be that no understanding can ever be possible.

By a cool reckoning of loss and gain, we would urge that the final alienation of the Indian people, to say nothing of the effect in other countries, would be incomparably more disastrous than any hypothetical loss of prestige. What we may lose by yielding is commonly exaggerated. We have encountered no one like this saintly rebel during all the generations we have ruled over India. Other nationalist leaders have been respected and admired, but this man is idolised. In this strange land, flooded as it still is and always was by its ever-present gods, the Mahatma is for most Hindus and even for some Moslems something more than a saint: they feel that God is in him. If we give way, they will not think that we have yielded to "moral blackmail" or political pressure. They will think that the hand of God was in it and that a new opportunity of reconciliation is offered to both countries. To yield to Him is not in their eyes weakness: it is piety.

The Western reader must forgive us if we write in this Oriental dialect. We are, let us assure him, in our own persons as Western-minded as he is himself. But it happens that we know Mr. Gandhi fairly well, and have taken some pains to grasp, without accepting, his view of the universe. There, it may be, we have an advantage over most of "the men on the spot." For a generation now, a cleavage so deep has separated the Bureaucracy from the more decidedly nationalist Indians, that they never meet, or if they do occasionally meet, it is only in frigid ceremonial intercourse. The argument of Sir Reginald Maxwell, the Home Member, that Mr. Gandhi is fasting in order to secure his unconditional release, reveals this total lack of comprehension. His fast is an appeal, as he conceives it, to the divine government of the world. He believes that if, with a pure mind, he offers himself as a sacrifice, God will be pleased to soften the hearts of India's rulers. This is not merely our guess. Mr. Rajagopalachari, who knows him as relative, friend and colleague without sharing his peculiar outlook, has said the same thing in precisely these words.

Here we are obviously in a world beyond logic. We like and approve these other-worldly tactics as little as most Englishmen do. This fast is not an appeal to reason, and most of us try, with indifferent success, to live by its light. But does the Government of India rely on rational persuasion? Its arrest and detention of Mr. Gandhi without trial were assuredly not an appeal to reason. As a result of this preventive measure, it has had to go on using what he describes as "leonine violence" against angry mobs of his admirers. Up to the end of last December, 60,000 persons had been arrested: 538 times the police and troops have fired, while the killed number 940 Indians and the injured 1,630. The number punished by the unforgivable humiliation of whipping was given by Mr. Amery as 958. These are not the effects of logic.

So far from fearing that the peace of India would suffer by Mr. Gandhi's release, we think it probable, as his own letters to the Viceroy suggested, that if he could look around him and convince himself that his own followers did resort to serious violence, he might use all his influence to end disobedience, as he did in like circumstances in 1922. If that happened, a way to agreement with the Moslems might be opened up. He has not himself asked for release. That he contemplates reconciliation is in our view clear from his suggestion that he might find a way out of the impasse if he were put among his colleagues of the Working Committee of Congress. But whatever the outcome of a renewed effort at conciliation, the one certainty is that his death would have consequences incomparably graver and more lasting than anything that could result from his release. It is not sentiment, but a sober, utilitarian calculation that calls for his liberation.

"Second Front"

True though it be that the Government cannot reveal or debate in Parliament the operational plans of the Anglo-American Command we cannot share the view expressed in the House of Lords by Lord Simon, and echoed for the Labour peers by Lord Listowel, that Lord Beaverbrook's plea for an early invasion of North-West Europe was a disservice to the country. On the contrary, Lord Beaverbrook did well to emphasise the great danger of complacency in Britain. There is a tendency, against which Mr. Maisky issued on Tuesday a timely warning, to believe that the U.S.S.R. is willing and able to win the war for us, and that a United Nations' victory, at no great cost to the land forces of Britain and the U.S.A., is inevitable and reasonably imminent. This is a dangerous delusion. Unaided—and in his Order of the Day Stalin paid scant regard to the Democracies' contribution up to date—the U.S.S.R. could probably destroy the German army in the long run. But it might be a very long run. At the cost, it may be, of prejudicing his agricultural and industrial production in 1944-45 Hitler's great 1943 "comb-out" will serve to make good a substantial part of his immediate losses at the front and may well enable the German generals either to risk a final, desperate offensive or to put up a formidable and protracted resistance on a shortened line. Stalin, whose Order once again disclaimed "conquest" as the Red Army's objective, might well feel that if the Germans, soundly beaten, were driven back into Poland, the security of the U.S.S.R. would be adequately secured. But if